

The Holiday Issue

#thebakefeed

bake

FROM SCRATCH™

79 Festive Recipes to
Make This Your Best
Holiday Yet

**Canadian
Baking**

[including
Butter Tarts &
Nanaimo Bars]

**A Visit to
Nuremberg's
Christmas
Market**

**Recipes for a
Party-Worthy
Cookie Tray**



CRANBERRY STREUSEL BUNDT
ON OUR CUSTOM AHEIRLOOM CAKE STAND
recipe on page 45

NOV/DEC 2017 VOLUME 3, ISSUE 6

\$12.99US \$14.99CAN



DISPLAY UNTIL DECEMBER 25, 2017



YOUR HOLIDAY *wishlist* JUST *got* LONGER.

New and just in time for the holidays – our Dark Chocolate Peppermint flavored coffee. For a limited time, get the taste of rich dark chocolate and smooth peppermint perfectly blended with 100% select Arabica coffee beans for a decadent treat. It's one more reason you'll wish the holidays lasted all year long. Make it your new holiday favorite, and

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* * * *

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PASSED DOWN RECIPES



THE SWANS DOWN® CAKE FLOUR DIFFERENCE

- Swans Down® Cake Flour is 27 times finer than all-purpose flour, so it makes your cakes rise higher and gives them a texture that is lighter, fluffier, and more moist.
- Swans Down® Cake Flour is great for all baked goods, not just cakes. It makes cookies more delicate, biscuits more tender, muffins more moist, pancakes fluffier, and everything more delicious.

TIPS FOR MEASURING SWANS DOWN® CAKE FLOUR

- Sift cake flour once, and then spoon desired amount into your measuring cup.
- Use a knife to scrape excess flour from measuring cup.
- Use dry measuring cups (as opposed to liquid) for measuring Swans Down® Cake Flour.

VANILLA-BUTTERMILK CAKE

Makes 1 (9-inch) cake

- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 cups (400 grams) granulated sugar
- 6 large eggs, separated
- 3 cups (300 grams) Swans Down® Cake Flour
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) baking powder
- $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
- 1 cup whole buttermilk
- 4 teaspoons vanilla extract

Vanilla-Buttermilk Frosting (recipe follows)

Garnish: fresh raspberries, fresh mint leaves

1. Preheat oven to 350°F. Spray 2 (9-inch) round deep cake pans with baking spray with flour. Line bottom of pans with parchment paper, and spray pans again.

2. In a large bowl, beat butter and sugar with a mixer at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg yolks, one at a time, beating well after each addition. In a medium bowl, whisk together Swans Down® Cake Flour, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition. Beat in vanilla.

3. In a large bowl, using clean beaters, beat egg whites with a mixer at high speed just until stiff peaks form. Stir one-fourth of egg whites into batter. Gently fold in remaining egg whites. Divide batter between prepared pans.

4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 30 minutes. Let cool in pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans,

and let cool completely on wire racks. Spread Vanilla-Buttermilk Frosting between layers and on top and sides of cake. Garnish with raspberries and mint, if desired.

VANILLA-BUTTERMILK FROSTING

Makes about 6 cups

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cups (284 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{2}{4}$ pounds (945 grams) confectioners' sugar, sifted
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (160 grams) whole buttermilk
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (0.75 grams) kosher salt

1. In a large bowl, beat butter with a mixer at medium speed until creamy. Gradually add confectioners' sugar and enough buttermilk to achieve a spreadable consistency. Beat in vanilla and salt.



Passed Down

From grandmothers to mothers, from mothers to daughters, since 1894, great bakers have passed down the knowledge that there's no substitute for Swans Down® Cake Flour. For perfect cakes, cookies, muffins, and more, nothing guarantees that first-bite smile like Swans Down.

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Flour**



Since 1894, bakers who know, know Swans Down.®



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bake

FROM SCRATCH™

november | december 2017 Volume 3, Issue 6

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the simplest
homemade
gifts...

for the biggest
holiday smiles.

brown sugar **fudge**

Ingredients

- | | |
|--|--|
| 3/4 cup walnuts, chopped | 1 (5 ounce) can evaporated milk |
| 1/2 cup (1 stick) salted butter | 1 teaspoon vanilla extract |
| 1 (16 ounce) box Domino® Light Brown Sugar | 3/4 cup Domino® Confectioners Sugar, measure after sifting |

Instructions

Line an 8x8-inch square pan with parchment paper, overlapping the sides of the pan slightly. Lightly butter parchment paper. Set pan aside.

Place nuts into a saucepan in a single layer. Over low heat, toast for 1 to 2 minutes. Set aside to cool.

Over low heat, in a heavy bottomed pan, melt butter. Add brown sugar and evaporated milk. Stir continuously until mixture boils and reaches the soft ball stage (240°F on a candy thermometer). Remove from heat.

Add vanilla and confectioners' sugar. Mix with electric mixer on low until vanilla and sugar are incorporated and mixture begins to have a dull finish, approximately 3 to 5 minutes. Stir in the toasted nuts.

Pour fudge mixture into prepared pan. Cool in refrigerator 30 minutes or until solid. Remove from pan by lifting out the parchment paper. Cut fudge into desired shapes using cookie cutters.

Store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 1 week.

Yield: 28 (1 1/2 - inch) star shapes.



Get all our holiday gift recipes at
dominosugar.com/homemade



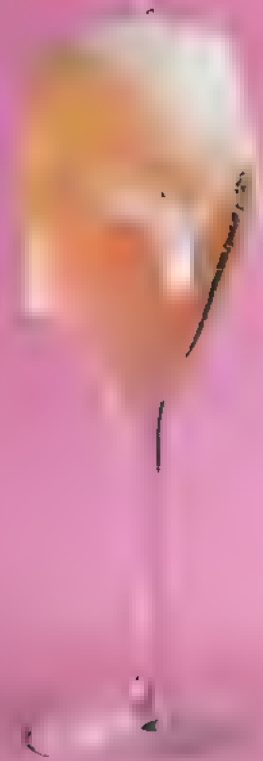
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ASR

THE NEW YORK TIMES
BEST
CHARLESTON
— 2014 —
WINE

where else is charleston

BOOKS OFF KAY & MOON



I MIGHT BE BEHIND ON MY GIFT SHOPPING,

but one thing I'm certainly not behind on is holiday baking! I love how autumn's pumpkin spice and cinnamon transition seamlessly to the flavors of gingerbread, peppermint, and nutmeg. Until now, I've never thought about Chinese five-spice as a seasonal staple, but thanks to my friend Rebecca Firth (of the blog *DisplacedHousewife*), my must-bake list just got a lot longer. From her Cranberry Streusel Bundt that graces our cover to Satsuma Marmalade Hand Pies, her amazing holiday bakes incorporate her spice cabinet favorite into recipes that are comforting and familiar, yet all twirled up.

This issue is full of festive and traditional recipes from around the world, including vibrant northern European wreath breads and classic Canadian desserts. Plus, we even take you inside one of Germany's most historic holiday markets.

Don't miss our holiday gift guide that begins on page 15. We've hand-selected the best gifts for bakers and even partnered with three amazing makers to design and bring you exclusive products that you'll definitely want on your wish list. Quantities are limited, so tell Santa to get yours on the way!

From all of us at *Bake from Scratch*, we wish you an amazing holiday season.

Happy baking!

Brian

Brian Hart Hoffman
Editor-in-Chief

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and follow us
for daily baking
inspiration.



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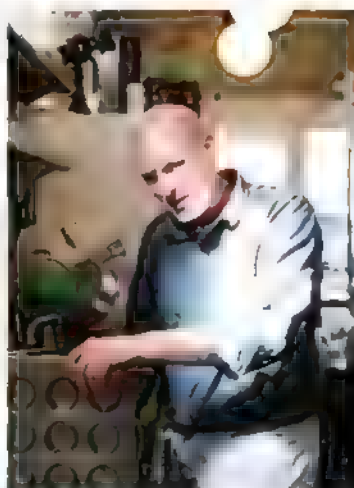
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Bill



David



BILL BOWICK AND DAVID BOUFFARD

Bill Bowick and David Bouffard are architects, bakers, and life partners. They met in New York City and, after a short stint in London, left for Charleston, South Carolina, to open Sugar Bakeshop in 2007. Since opening, the bakery has appeared in *Food & Wine*, *Bon Appétit*, *Taste of the South*, and *Travel + Leisure*. David and Bill reside in Charleston and, come every holiday season, bake masterful gingerbread homes—and sell baking kits—modeled after the classic Charleston single house.

Favorite holiday cookie: “Sugar cookies—my mom’s recipe—because they’re sweet, buttery, and beautiful.” —Bill

“Gingerbread cookies because they warm your soul.” —David

JOE SCHMELZER

Recognized for the use of natural light in his images and his knack for making even the prickliest subjects feel at ease, Joe Schmelzer has worked with many major interiors-centric magazines, including *Architectural Digest* and *ELLE Decor*. Joe, his long-time partner, Nick, and their canine companions, Parker and Moose, now make their home-office in the Eagle Rock neighborhood of Los Angeles.

Favorite holiday cookie: “It’s probably my Jewish upbringing, but I love hamantaschen, the Jewish cookie made to commemorate Purim, preferably with a soft poppy seed filling.”

MAYA VISNYEI

Maya is an editorial and commercial food photographer currently living in downtown Toronto, Canada. She loves bringing luxury to everyday subjects and is known for her refined simplicity. She works as a freelance photographer and has shot for *Canadian Living*, Nestlé, and Haagen-Dazs. When she’s not in the studio, you can find her tucked away at a table with her husband in any one of Toronto’s newest restaurants and bakeries.

Favorite holiday cookie: “The classic shortbread cookie. Shortbread was a staple around the holidays in my house, and something about that buttery melt-in-your-mouth texture always brings me back.”

REBECCA FIRTH

Rebecca Firth is a writer, a recipe developer, a food blogger, and the creator of the blog *DisplacedHousewife*. A California native, she has traveled extensively throughout Asia, and while living in Beijing, she experimented with infusing Asian spices and flavors into her baked confections. Her first recipe was published in *Sunset Magazine* in 2014, and since then, her work has been featured in *Teen Vogue*, *Huffington Post*, and *Epicurious*. She lives in the Santa Ynez Valley with her two kids, Stella and Gavin, and her five rambunctious chickens.

Joe



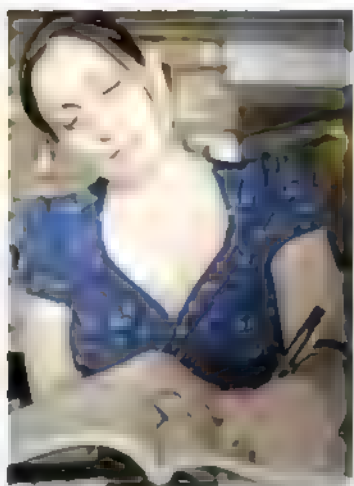
Maya



Rebecca



A. a



Favorite holiday cookie: “Peppermint Sandwich Cookies. They’re composed of two super chocolaty, chewy cookies stuffed with a cool peppermint cream that’s flecked with crushed candies. Holiday heaven!”

ALIA AKKAM

Food, travel, drinks, and design have long been Alia Akkam’s passions, and she’s been lucky enough to write about these topics for such outlets as *Vogue*, *Playboy*, and *Hospitality Design*. A native New Yorker, Alia fulfilled a childhood dream by moving to Europe in 2015. Now a resident of Budapest, she loves spending rainy afternoons in grand old cafés eating sponge cake desserts.

Favorite holiday cookie: “The fragile, buttery spritz—especially when twinkling with red or green sprinkles—is an addiction for me. As a kid, I was fascinated by this cookie’s European roots and begged my mother to buy the gun that squirted the dough through fancy wreath and star templates.”

bake FROM SCRATCH TEAM



JADE SINACORI

Jade Sinacori is a Recipe Developer & Food Stylist at Hoffman Media. Her childhood memories of eating deep-fried and jelly-filled croissants (a precursor to the Cronut by nearly 27 years) at Beach Bakery in Westhampton Beach, New York, led to an obsession with the art of pastry. Jade attended Johnson & Wales University in Rhode Island. After a few years working in various kitchens in New York City and Cape Cod, Jade decided to experience some Southern charm and moved to Birmingham, Alabama, to join *Bake from Scratch*.

Favorite holiday cookie: “Peppernidge Farm Gingerbread Men. My mother and I have a tradition of sharing a bag while grocery shopping. We have an ongoing debate on the proper way to enjoy them: I usually begin at the top while she insists that the crispy legs are the way to go.”

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Bundt Cake
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RESOURCES

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at bakefromscratch.com

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Photo of Alice Medrich by
Deborah Jones. Photos of flours
by Leigh Beisch, excerpted from
Gluten-Free Flavor Flours by

Alice Medrich (Artisan Books)
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Products
Page 19
Facture Goods photo courtesy
Facture Goods.

Take Five
Pages 37–46
Surface by Erickson Woodworks,
ericksonwoodworks.com

RECIPE CORRECTIONS

While we aim for perfection with each of our recipes, we do make the occasional mistake. Here is a correction from our most recent issue.

SEPTEMBER/OCTOBER 2017
Chocolate Almond Mooncakes,
p. 109: Use 1¼ cups (182 grams)
cake flour.

BAKER'S MOST WANTED

DON'T KEEP YOUR HOLIDAY SHOPPERS GUESSING. SLIP THEM THIS LIST TO SHOW THEM WHAT YOU REALLY WANT UNDER THE TREE.

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARCY SIMPSON / STYLING BY COURTNEY BODIFORD

1. JOHN JULIAN DESIGN'S PORCELAIN MORTAR + PESTLE

Both a mod décor statement piece and a functional baker's tool, this mortar and pestle impresses with an unglazed, matte porcelain finish to help you pulverize spices in style.

\$146, hernottgrace.com

2. LOSTINE BAGUETTE CUTTING BOARD XL

Doubling as a cutting board and a colorful serving platter, this nautically inspired board brings function and flair to your table.

\$150, shophome.com

3. PAIN BAGUETTE TOTE

À plat, a San Francisco-based company devoted to creating sustainable culinary tote bags, has a new entry in the game: the baguette tote, the best way to take your love of boulangerie on the road.

\$48, aplatsf.com

4. ATELIER TREMA CERAMIC BUTTER DISH

With a nod toward European style, this oatmeal clay and white-glazed ceramic butter dish is the elegant container your high-quality butter deserves.

\$39.69, chicbasta.com

5. MYKILOS BREAD BOX

Keep your bread fresh while adding a modern touch of minimalist design to your kitchen. Bonus points: the lid pulls double duty as a cutting board.

\$141, mykilos.com

6. NERSHI WOODWORKS WALNUT WOOD #2 SPREADER

Hand carved by the Nershi family, a team of woodworkers based in upstate New York, each wooden spreader is available in various shades of maple, cherry, or walnut woods.

\$20, nershiwoodworks.com

7. LE CREUSET TART TATIN DISH

With inverted handles that make for easy flipping, this enameled cast-iron dish has one clear purpose: baking the ideal tarte Tatin.

\$125, lecreuset.com

8. BERGAMOT SYRUP

Bergamot is often used in Earl Grey tea. Now you can add a twist of citrus to buttercreams, cocktails, and cakes with a generous drizzle of bergamot syrup.

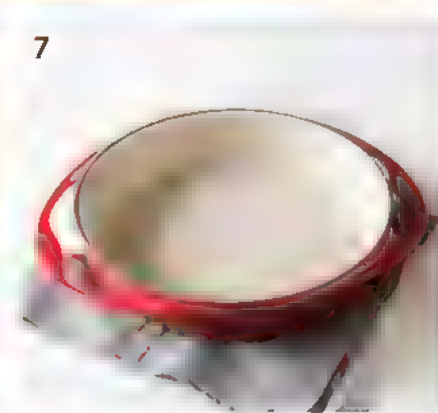
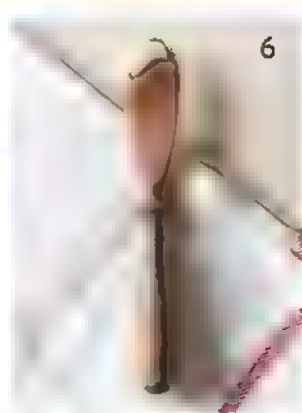
\$14, robertlambert.com

1

2

3

4



9. KOMO CLASSIC GRAIN MILL

Bring the mill home with this countertop electric grain mill that can grind your choice of grain to any texture you choose, from finest flour to a cracked grain. It's as "from scratch" as you can get.

\$499, pleasanthillgrain.com

10. STACKABLE CONTAINERS SET OF 2

Stop compromising between organization and style, and invest in these handcrafted containers. The subtle pop of orange comes from the unglazed porcelain's reaction to its unique soda firing

\$110, mastro.co

11. GEO CAST COOKIE STAMPS

One press of these cookie stamps will bring a pop of modern style to your holiday cookie tray.

\$38.50, nordicware.com

12. OLIVE WOOD CRAFTS ROLLING PIN + FLOUR SPOON

Handcrafted in Tunisia by the artisans behind Olive Wood Crafts, this rolling pin and flour spoon are made of durable, moisture-resistant, and delicately veined olive wood.

\$39.99, etsy.com

13. THIRSTYSTONE OLD HOLLYWOOD TIERED STAND

With touches of gold, this two-tiered marble dessert stand is an elegant platform to showcase your best work from the kitchen

\$89.99, allmodern.com

14. SILPAT COOKIE BAKING MAT

Make perfect cookies every time with the help of this nonstick mat, with stencils to help keep uniform shape while the silicone material helps optimize heat conduction for evenly baked cookies.

\$26.95, surlatable.com

15. WILLIAMS SONOMA ROUND COOLING RACK

Let your desserts cool in style with this narrow-gridded copper wire rack.

\$19.95, williams-sonoma.com

16. OVEN-TO-TABLE ENTERTAINING PLATTER

The savvy host in your life will covet this soapstone platter that can be heated or chilled to keep everything from cookies to flatbread to pots de crème at the ideal serving temperature.

\$64.95, uncommongoods.com

17. SMOKED CHOCOLATE CHIPS

Pushing the boundaries of sweet and savory, these cold-smoked chocolate chips bring a unique campfire flavor to any classic baked good.

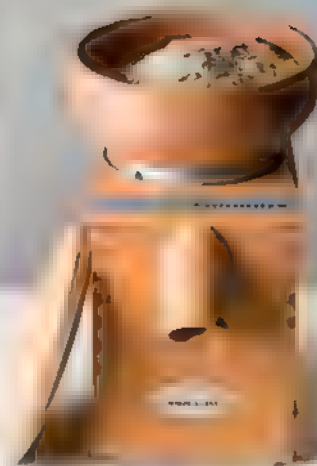
\$15, getyourhotcakes.com

18. ARAUCANA EGG BOARD

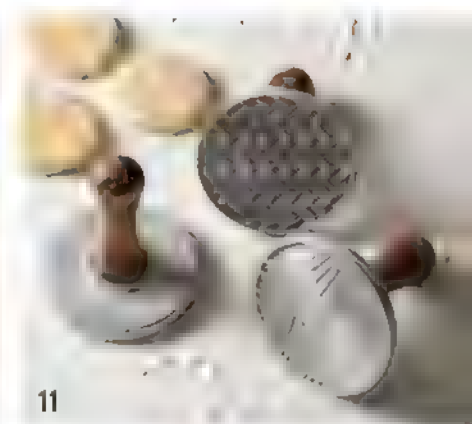
Carved from New England ash, this handsome board is the perfect display for your farm-fresh eggs.

\$85, farmhousepottery.com

9



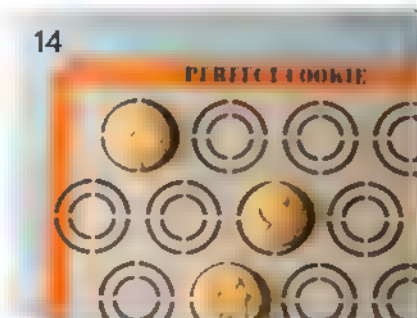
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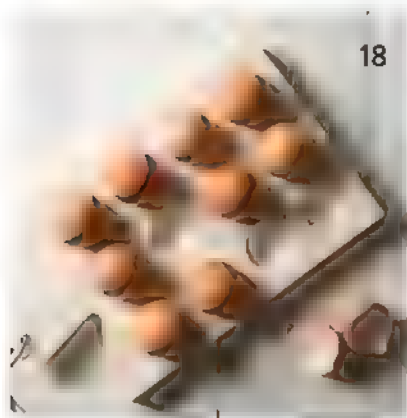
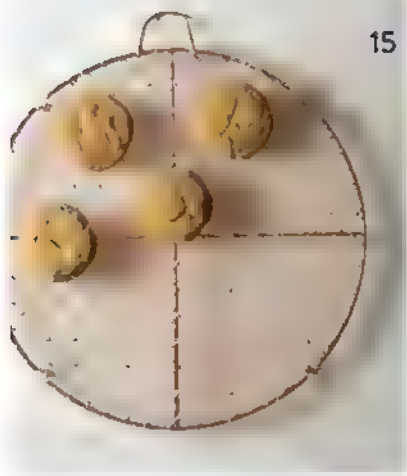
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19. SMEG 50s STYLE PASTEL BLUE STAND MIXER

Offering both a blast from the past and a glimpse into the future, this design award-winning mixer has both 600-watt power and a 10-variable speed dial to make even the stiffest mixing jobs a breeze. \$459.95, abt.com

20. CAST-IRON EGG PAN

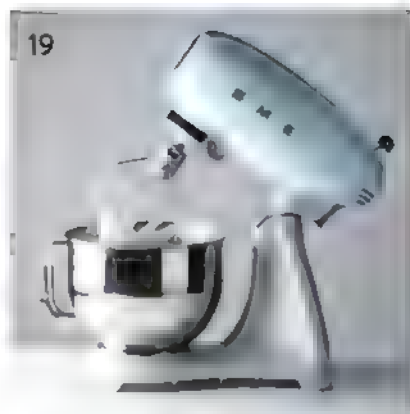
The smallest (and cutest) cast iron you'll ever see. Although designed for a single egg, we like this petite wonder for compotes, sides, and mini cookie skillets. \$77, nesthomeware.com

21. 6-CUP POPOVER PAN

This candy-apple red popover pan has six nonstick, deep, tapered wells that produce perfect popovers (or muffins) every time. Just in time for New Year's brunch. \$18, neimanmarcus.com

22. TICINGS DARK CHOCOLATE CONFETTI SPRINKLES

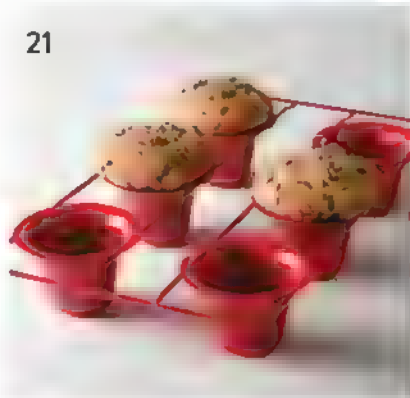
Ticings, a gourmet sprinkle company, is bringing both high-quality ingredients and fun to the baking world with their naturally dyed and chocolate-based confetti sprinkles. \$9.95-\$29.95, ticings.com



19



20



21



22



BAKE FROM SCRATCH EXCLUSIVE PRODUCTS

Bake from Scratch has partnered with the industry's most exciting artisans to create handcrafted, exclusive products with you, our beloved bakers, in mind. Head to bakefromscratch.com for one-stop shopping

1. FACTURE GOODS BENCH SCRAPER, OFFSET SPATULA, AND CAKE SERVER

Hand-forged brass blades and hand-carved walnut wood handles combine to create a stunning and sturdy trio of essential baker's tools. Extra-Wide Bench Scraper \$100, Offset Spatula \$60, Cake Slicer/Server \$80



1

2. HEDLEY & BENNETT APRON

With a hint of French blue and brass hardware, this stain-resistant, wrinkle-proof blue herringbone apron packs two pockets, a towel loop, adjustable straps, and a snug top pouch for your phone. \$110



2

3. AHEIRLOOM CAKE STAND

Handcrafted with the same attention to detail you devote to your baking, this walnut wood-based cake stand offers a low (3.5-inch) and steady perch—the perfect platform to ice and display your grand cakes. The stand even stars on the cover of this issue. \$75



3



expert q & a

ALICE MEDRICH

— ON —

BAKING WITH NON-WHEAT FLOURS



AWARD-WINNING AUTHOR ALICE MEDRICH SHARES HOW ALTERNATIVE
FLOURS REINVIGORATE YOUR BAKING WITH DEEPER FLAVOR AND
TEXTURE, WHETHER YOU ARE GLUTEN-FREE OR NOT



In your book *Flavor Flours* (Artisan Books, 2014) and the newly released paperback version, *Gluten-Free Flavor Flours*, you delve into the world of baking with non-wheat varieties of flour, making them the hero ingredient instead of just a mere substitution for wheat. From sorghum and teff to rice and corn flour (and not to mention nut flours galore!), there are lots to choose from. Of these, do you have a favorite to bake with?

I love buckwheat. It has a reputation for bringing robust, earthy flavors, but different approaches can coax delicate characteristics from it. I found that it lends these incredible notes of honey and floral flavors like rose. It's a great example of how any given flour can produce contrary results, depending on how it is handled and the type of recipe it is used in.

If you are a baker just starting to try your hand at using non-wheat flours, are there any recipes that are good for experimentation?

For bakers who are just getting into this and want to really taste the flavors of these flours without getting into a more elaborate recipe, I suggest starting with waffles and pancakes. Just substitute different flours in, and see if you like the taste. Pancakes and waffles are flat, don't need much structure, and contain plenty of liquid to hydrate the flour, so you know they'll come out every time.

Is it a good idea to blend two types of non-wheat flours in a recipe? Or should bakers stick to a single kind?

With *Flavor Flours*, I set out to prove that these flours can stand alone, but yes, you can definitely pair non-wheat flours together in a recipe. When blending, you want contrasting characteristics in the flours to create an overall balance in the baked good. Rice flour makes a successful pairing with most of the flours because it can open up and lighten the flavors.

Most classic wheat flour-based recipes require techniques to either inhibit or encourage gluten development. When baking with non-wheat flours, you take gluten out of the equation. How does this change your baking procedure?

Alternative flours often make your recipe simpler with less fuss and fewer steps. Your ingredients don't have to be at room temperature. You never have to worry with that dance of alternating the liquid with the dry ingredient. Flour doesn't need to be added to batters in three parts alternating with two parts liquid.

If you can disregard a few of the old baking rules, are there new rules you should consider when baking with non-wheat flours?

Hydration is a critical factor. To prevent a gritty or powdery texture in tart and cookie doughs, you need a little more liquid (and sometimes a longer rest period) than usual. These doughs have to be hydrated enough so that they actually taste cooked rather than pasty. Some baked goods,



like cookies, tarts, or pastries, taste better when baked for a longer time period at a lower temperature.

Non-wheat flour-based cakes baked in deep pans often sink in the center because of lack of structure. Do you have any suggestions to prevent this?

Change the pan, not the recipe. Use a tube pan or a wide, shallower pan to make a sheet cake to roll up and make a roulade. Bake multiple thin layers, and stack them. Flours without gluten are not strong enough to cause doming, which can be an advantage when creating a layer cake.

What should you look for when purchasing non-wheat flours? Do most grocery stores carry a wide selection, or should bakers seek out health food stores?

Alternative flours often have a shorter shelf life than wheat-based flours, so go for the stores that have high turnover or seek out respectable online sources. Always look at "sell-by" and "best-by" dates on the package and buy conservative amounts. A high-end grocery store or health food store will have all of them, and a chain may have less options. All these flours are available online. Authentic Foods (authenticfoods.com) is a wonderful source for superfine flours, and I've always been a fan of Bob's Red Mill (bobsredmill.com).

What is the best way to store non-wheat flours?

Store non-wheat in a cool, dry place. Unopened packages can be kept until their "sell-by" dates. Once opened, store them in an airtight container. The less air in the container, the better. They will keep this way for up to three months. The freezer will also do if you've got a lot of flour and don't think you can use it within a year. Store flours in the refrigerator or freezer for up to six months. ☞

perfect pairing

Panna Cotta & CLARIFIED EGGNOG

IN THIS ISSUE, THE DRUNK BAKERS, OUR COCKTAIL AND BAKING DUO, GIVE OUR FAVORITE HOLIDAY COCKTAIL A FRESH TWIST BY TRANSFORMING IT INTO A CLARIFIED MILK PUNCH AND SERVING IT WITH SILKEN PANNA COTTA MADE FROM HOMEMADE CURDS

BY ALLISON KAVE AND KEAVY LANDRETH

Eggnog: the most polarizing of holiday cocktails. Some love it for its rich, creamy consistency, its intense boozy, and its warm winter spices. Others believe that heavy cream and raw egg have no place in a cocktail. Personally, the two of us are split right down these lines, so we decided to take on the challenge of creating a cocktail that bridges the gap. We turned to a classic cocktail technique (and when we say "classic," we mean "historic"): clarified milk punch. Once used to prevent cocktails from spoiling in the days before the electric refrigerator, this method involves creating a cocktail with a citrus component, then adding hot milk to the mix, which curdles on contact. After straining the resulting mess, you're left with cocktail-scented curds and a clarified cocktail (you're essentially making boozy ricotta cheese!). The result is a clarified milk punch with all the flavor of classic eggnog and a silky richness from the whey left behind. Being of the "waste not, want not" perspective, rather than tossing the curds, we stir them into the smoothest, most decadent panna cotta you've ever tasted. Make a big batch of both, and serve them at your holiday party to please both the lovers and the haters!









CLARIFIED EGGNOG

Makes 16 servings

What do you get when you add and then remove the dairy from egg nog? A crystal-clear, silky-smooth cocktail with the warm, rich spiced flavor you know and love without the thick texture that some find off-putting. We like brandy and rum as the base spirits for our egg nog, but you can easily swap in bourbon if that's your preference. This is a straightforward but time-consuming process, so we highly suggest making a big batch and using it as an excuse to throw a holiday bash!

- 2½ cups (600 grams) brandy
 - 1½ cups (360 grams) aged rum
 - 1 cup (240 grams) orange liqueur
 - ½ cup (170 grams) mild honey
 - ½ cup (120 grams) fresh lemon juice
 - ½ cup (120 grams) fresh orange juice
 - 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground nutmeg
 - 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground cinnamon
 - 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cloves
 - 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground allspice
 - 4 cups (960 grams) whole milk
- Garnish: orange twists

1. In a large bowl, whisk together brandy, rum, orange liqueur, honey, lemon juice, orange juice, nutmeg, cinnamon, cloves, and allspice. Pour into a large heatproof container.
2. In a large saucepan, heat milk over medium heat, stirring frequently, just until bubbles form around edges of pan (do not boil). Remove from heat, and pour into brandy mixture. Immediately, curds will form on surface of mixture. Using a perforated spoon (or a skimmer designed specifically for this purpose), skim larger curds off top of cocktail, and reserve for Eggnog Panna Cotta.
3. Strain remaining mixture through a straining bag, coffee filters, or a very fine-mesh chinois strainer into a large glass pitcher or plastic container. This will take a fair bit of time (the exact length of time depends on how tightly woven your strainer is), so you can leave it to strain in your refrigerator overnight if you're planning ahead.
4. After the mixture has strained, reserve the Clarified Eggnog curds, and check the cocktail for clarity. If it's crystal clear, you're good to go. If it's still a bit cloudy, you have a few options. Pour the cocktail through a coffee filter-lined

chinois (this will take at least a couple of hours, and you might have to replace the filters periodically); pour it through the straining bag again if its weave is tight enough; or refrigerate it overnight (without moving it), and then siphon off the clarified cocktail, as the remaining fine milk solids will settle to the bottom.

5. At the end, you'll be left with a delicious, perfectly clear, amber-hued cocktail. Bottle it, or add it to a punch bowl. Garnish with an orange twist, if desired. This cocktail will keep in the refrigerator for up to 1 year, so feel free to make it well ahead of time.

EGGNOG PANNA COTTA

Makes 4¼ cups

When done right, panna cotta is light, creamy, and ethereal. When done wrong, it can be a soupy mess or an over-gelled rubber ball. This is a foolproof recipe, inspired by the platonic ideal of the form: the panna cotta at Franny's in Brooklyn, which is the best we've ever had. It toes the line between rich and light, and just holds itself together. With the curds from our Clarified Eggnog, it provides classic holiday flavor in a totally unexpected form.

- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) cold water
 - 2 teaspoons (8 grams) unflavored gelatin
 - 3 cups (720 grams) heavy whipping cream
 - ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
 - ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
 - 2 vanilla beans, split lengthwise, seeds scraped and reserved
 - 2 cups (450 grams) reserved Clarified Eggnog curds
- Garnish: grated fresh nutmeg

1. In a small bowl, stir together 2 tablespoons (30 grams) cold water and gelatin; let stand until softened, about 5 minutes.
2. In a large saucepan, combine cream, sugar, and salt. Add vanilla beans and reserved seeds, and bring to a simmer over medium heat. Add reserved Clarified Eggnog curds and gelatin mixture, stirring until completely dissolved. Strain through a chinois into a liquid-measuring cup.
3. Pour into ramekins or small bowls. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface to prevent a skin from forming. Refrigerate for at least 4 hours or overnight. Serve in ramekins, or if you're feeling adventurous, run a paring knife around perimeter of each ramekin, and invert onto small plates. Garnish with nutmeg, if desired. ▫



L.A. WOMAN

SQIRL'S JESSICA KOSLOW
UNDERSTANDS THE CHARM
OF SCRAPPINESS

There are many theories about the wild success of Squirrel, the unassuming Los Angeles café with the never-shrinking line out the door. Much attention has been lavished upon the house-made jam, served dripping off thick slices of brioche, and to the lemon- and herb-kissed breakfast rice bowl with its creamy French feta and pickled watermelon radishes. But I'm not sure enough credit has been given to that magical, sticky, stretchy consistency that happens when the crust of a baked good has a sugar-to-flour ratio that creates cake-caramel, which sticks to your teeth and to your heart. It's that glossy, sticky edge that makes owner Jessica Koslow's Malva Pudding Cake so hauntingly irresistible and distinguishes the bottom of her fruit upside-down cakes. It's one detail among many, but it's another tactile pleasure that helps to define a meal at Squirrel.

That stretchy sugar magic is no coincidence. Jessica's earliest memory of cooking is making Rice Krispies Treats with her dad, and she admits to being obsessed with texture—that crystalized sugar texture in particular. She was always a home baker. In college and graduate school, she says, "I spent more time testing recipes and techniques than doing school work." Still, Jessica took a circuitous route to becoming one of the country's hottest young chefs, her path winding through a stint as a baker in Australia, a cook at one of the South's best restaurants, and a job as a producer on *American Idol*.









She credits a fateful meal at Atlanta's Bacchanalia as the spark that truly ignited her passion for cooking. "The desserts were, at the time, life changing," she says. "I ate at the bar and watched the cooks, and just wanted to be on that line desperately." Jessica wrote an email to chef Anne Quatrano begging for a job. "She was in need of a pastry cook, and I was a body ready to work. My life changed forever."

Jessica spent years in the kitchens of Anne's various Atlanta restaurants before returning to Southern California, where she was raised. In the meantime, she had developed an obsession with canning, and the incredible fruit available year-round in California called her home. Sqrl, located on a downtrodden block in East Hollywood, began as a jam-making operation. That jam quickly became (and remains) a cult food item, with flavors such as Persian mulberry and Santa Rosa plum. Eventually, Jessica invited some friends with an emerging coffee company to join her on the site, and the café opened, serving seasonal jam on toast.

From day one, Sqrl was scrappy above all else. The tables and chairs were rickety and not quite plentiful enough, the menu was written on a blackboard with many of the items crossed out by day's end, and the marketing was 100 percent word of mouth. Early on, so much attention was paid to the ridiculous twee trendiness of standing in line for gourmet toast that the astounding quality of the food almost went unnoticed. Employing a mainly female kitchen staff, Jessica was sourcing the best produce she could find at the markets, and taking the lessons and aesthetics she learned at Bacchanalia and translating them into to a more Californian, more casual format. Perhaps most importantly, the techniques and creativity she'd learned in fine dining were applied to breakfast and baked goods, which at the time were revolutionary. These days, giving breakfast as much attention as dinner is a nationwide trend, and Jessica deserves much of the credit for that

Over time, the space increased slightly, the tables and chairs became more plentiful (though no less rickety), and the menu broadened. Daily specials might include delicate house-made pastas or local yellowtail poached in olive oil. In 2015, Jessica signed a two-book deal with Abrams. The first, a celebration of Sqrl titled *Everything I Want to Eat* (Abram Books, 2016), came out in the fall of 2016. The documents a certain kind of breezy L.A. lifestyle that's steeped in casual good taste with a Bohemian edge, but it also provides some damn fine recipes. (The recipe for Flaky-Ass Biscuits is a revelation.) Jessica's second book, which will focus on jam making, is due out in the spring of 2019.

Closer on the horizon is a new restaurant called Tel, a reference to Tel Aviv, the Israeli city that serves as inspiration for the project. If Sqrl started small and grew slowly, Tel is the opposite. The 8,000-square-foot space in west L.A. will be an all-day restaurant, bakery, and event space, with a full dinner service, focusing on the foods of the Jewish diaspora. Tel is slated to open this spring.

These days, Jessica spends less time baking and more time as an operator, mentoring up-and-coming chefs the way Anne once mentored her. "The thing many chefs don't talk about is the transition from being on the line every day, to acting as an overseer and operator," she says. "Our role becomes more of the captain, and the cooks and chefs are the sails."

Is she surprised by the immense success of Sqrl and the acclaim she's garnered from opening a toast and jam café on a grungy East Hollywood corner? "Absolutely," she says. "But I don't take it for granted. Of course, I wish I had a fancier place, but I also recognize the charm that comes from scrappiness." ▮



GO THERE

SQIRL

720 Virgil Ave. #4

Los Angeles, CA 90029

323.284.8147 | sqirlla.com



from the pantry

SUGAR

HAVE YOURSELF A VERY, VERY, VERY SWEET CHRISTMAS

BY PAULA FORBES

My dad divides holidays into two categories: the gift holidays and the candy holidays. Gift holidays are when you give people presents: birthdays, Fathers' Day, Mothers' Day. They are also, in his opinion, vastly inferior to the candy holidays: Halloween, Easter, and Valentine's Day.

And then there's Christmas. Aside from its obvious religious connotations, Christmas rules over the kingdom of holidays by virtue of being not only a gift holiday and a candy holiday, but also a cookie holiday, a hot chocolate and eggnog holiday, and a stocking-stuffed-to-the-brim-with-chocolates holiday, not to mention a sugar plum fairy holiday.

In other words, the holidays are nothing without sugar.

December holidays in particular are historically associated with sweets because sugar is a great way to preserve summer goodies for winter feasting. Before refrigeration,

dishes like fruitcake or mincemeat pies employed candied fruit as a way to incorporate out-of-season harvests or bounties from far-off lands (figs, dates, citrus). Sugar plays a role in making old-fashioned treats that are heavily spiced or liquor-drenched more palatable: where would speculoos or brandy-lit Christmas puddings be without a touch of sweetness?

Sugar also lends a hand to structural elements. Icing is the cement that ensures your gingerbread house doesn't become gingerbread rubble. On a more foundational level, sugar helps define the texture of holiday cookies and candies. The longer you cook sugar, the harder it becomes when it cools—that's how you achieve the soft chew of a caramel, the dense tackiness of a toffee, and the crisp snap of a candy cane. Meanwhile, specialty types like pearl sugar or demerara can add crunch and sparkle to the tops of sweet breads, cookies, and cakes.



As every 5 year old with a tub of sprinkles and a vat of icing knows, the best part of holiday baking is the decorating. Again, we'd be nowhere without sugar. Icing turns plain old sugar cookies into masterpieces while sprinkles, nonpareils, colored sugar, and edible glitter add some holiday glitz. Even something as simple as dusting powdered sugar over a cutout paper snowflake can take a simple cake or pan of brownies into brilliantly festive territory.

While most cultures have had access to sweeteners like honey since ancient times, sugar as we know it was first made from sugarcane in the Pacific Islands. Cane sugar—made by boiling cane juice down until it forms crystals—made its way west through India and was available in Persia by the sixth century. Once a luxury item, sugar really hit its stride in the 18th century when a process was developed to extract sugar from beets, which grow in a wider variety of climates than sugarcane. These days, you can find both cane and beet sugar on the market.

No matter which type you use, sugar provides a jolly boost to your holiday sweets, be it textural, decorative, or flavorful. And as every fan of the candy holidays will tell you, holiday sweets need all the extra they can get. Just ask my dad.

A WORLD OF SUGARS

From muscovado to pearl, sugar goes way beyond granulated. But most of them start in the same place: with cane or beet sugar. Molasses, a natural byproduct of the sugar refinement process, is either refined out of the product entirely (for white sugars), removed partially (for raw brown sugars), or removed and added back in later (for conventional brown sugar).

GRANULATED

Refined white sugar, typically derived from sugar cane or sugar beets, that has had all molasses content removed.

POWDERED/10X

Just what it sounds like: granulated sugar turned into a powder. Sometimes pastry chefs call it 10x, referring to the fineness of the powder. It's also known as confectioners' sugar, which is what we call for in our recipes.

BROWN SUGAR

Brown sugar gets its color and deep, rich flavor thanks to molasses, typically added to white sugar after the refinement process. Light brown sugar has less molasses; dark brown sugar has more.

MUSCOVADO

Unlike brown sugar, muscovado sugar is not fully refined and retains all or part of its molasses content. The result is a brown to very dark brown sugar that can have a shiny, almost wet appearance. It is excellent in gingerbread.

TURBINADO AND DEMERARA

These so-called raw sugars are relatively unrefined, much like muscovado, but they have more molasses content removed. With large grains and a light amber color, they add pleasant crunch when sprinkled over cookies or muffins.

SUPERFINE AND CASTER SUGAR

Very finely ground granulated sugar that's not yet powdered. Often used in applications where sugar needs to dissolve in cooler liquids, like in cocktails or meringues.

SANDING SUGAR

Sugar with large, coarse crystals used for decoration; what Christmas cookie dreams are made of. It's also called sparkling sugar.

PEARL SUGAR

Also known as nib sugar, pearl sugar consists of large bits of refined white sugar that don't melt during baking, providing fantastic sugary crunch. It's often associated with Belgium, as it's a necessary ingredient in the famed Liège waffles, and Sweden, where a slightly smaller grain of pearl sugar is sprinkled on everything from cardamom rolls to Christmas cookies.



BAKE WITH SUGAR

In this issue, don't miss:

**Orange and Campari
Turkish Delight (for
confectioners' sugar),
page 54**

**Swedish Saffranskrans (for
pearl sugar), page 68**

**Chocolate Peppermint
Cookies (for turbinado),
page 93**

**Sugar Pie (for brown
sugar), page 102**



Take Five

BLOGGER REBECCA FIRTH BRINGS
A KICK TO YOUR HOLIDAY BAKING
WITH CHINESE FIVE-SPICE POWDER,
THE NEW ALL-STAR IN YOUR BAKING
REPERTOIRE

PHOTOGRAPHY BY JOE SCHMELZER
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD STYLING BY REBECCA FIRTH

So, what is Chinese Five-Spice?

Chinese Five-Spice is a blend of five spices: star anise, fennel seeds, cloves, Sichuan peppercorns, and ginger. It is used in a variety of Chinese dishes, including soups, stews, and marinades. The spices are ground together and used as a seasoning. The blend is also used in Chinese medicine to treat a variety of ailments, including colds, flu, and digestive issues.

Five-Spice
Molasses Cookies
page 45



cover recipe





SPICED CRANBERRY SCONES

Makes 16

These moist, tender scones are a great make-ahead holiday breakfast. Simply prepare all the way up until pre-bake, freeze for 1 hour, wrap tightly in plastic wrap, and store in a resealable plastic bag in the freezer. When ready to brunch, take directly from the freezer to the oven, and bake as instructed, adding a few extra minutes of bake time

- 1 cup (170 grams) fresh or frozen cranberries,* chopped
 - 3 tablespoons (32 grams) minced candied ginger
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (100 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar, divided
 - 1 teaspoon (2 grams) Chinese five-spice powder
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
 - $2\frac{1}{2}$ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour
 - 2 tablespoons (30 grams) baking powder
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (180 grams) heavy whipping cream, chilled
 - 1 large egg (50 grams)
 - 1 tablespoon (9 grams) tangerine zest
- Tangerine Glaze (recipe follows)

1. In a small bowl, toss together cranberries, ginger, 2 tablespoons (24 grams) sugar, five-spice powder, and cinnamon. Set aside.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, salt, and remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (100 grams) sugar. Using a pastry blender, cut in cold butter until mixture is crumbly.
3. In a small bowl, whisk together cream, egg, and zest. Drizzle cream mixture over dough, and stir with a fork until a craggy ball forms. Add cranberry mixture, gently folding and pressing until distributed throughout. (If it's dry outside, you'll have some flour remaining in the bottom of the bowl; conversely, if it's humid, you may need a touch extra flour to keep the dough from being too sticky.)
4. On a lightly floured surface, turn out dough, and cut into quarters. With lightly floured hands, pat each quarter into a disk, about $\frac{3}{4}$ inch thick. Make sure sides of each disk are straight, forming 90-degree angles. Place disks on 2 large parchment-covered baking sheets, and freeze for 20 minutes
5. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C), and place rack in top third of oven.

6. Using a very sharp knife, cut each disk into 4 petite scones. Place 2 inches apart on baking sheets.

7. Bake for 13 to 16 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Drizzle cooled scones with Tangerine Glaze.

**If using frozen cranberries, thaw and drain well before folding into batter.*

TANGERINE GLAZE

Makes about $\frac{1}{4}$ cup

- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (180 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 1 tablespoon (9 grams) tangerine zest
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) fresh tangerine juice
- 1 to 2 tablespoons (15 to 30 grams) whole milk

1. In a small bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and tangerine zest and juice until smooth. Add milk, 1 tablespoon (15 grams) at a time, until desired consistency is reached.

SPICED PERSIMMON COCONUT CAKE

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

I'm always looking for fresh ways to use persimmons from my yard in California. This cake hints of a tropical vacation with the coconut and lime, but the persimmons and spices make it a decidedly holiday cake. Use either firm Fuyu or cinnamon persimmons for this recipe

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 cups (400 grams) granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (112 grams) sunflower seed or other neutral oil
- 4 large eggs (200 grams), room temperature
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature
- 1 tablespoon (9 grams) lime zest
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) fresh lime juice
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) coconut extract
- $3\frac{1}{4}$ cups (406 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) Chinese five-spice powder
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking soda
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground ginger
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) sea salt
- 1 cup (240 grams) whole buttermilk, room temperature and shaken
- 3 cups (510 grams) stemmed, peeled, and finely diced Fuyu or cinnamon persimmons, divided

- 2 cups (200 grams) unsweetened fine flaked coconut, toasted and divided
- Spiced Buttercream (recipe follows)
- Garnish: fresh sage leaves

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Butter and flour 3 (8-inch) round cake pans.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add oil, and beat until well combined. With mixer on low speed, add eggs and egg yolk, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Beat in lime zest and juice and coconut extract.

3. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, five-spice powder, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, ginger, and salt. Gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with buttermilk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition. Fold in three-fourths of persimmons and $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (150 grams) coconut. Divide batter among prepared pans, smoothing tops with a spatula. Gently tap pans on counter to release any air bubbles.

4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 24 to 27 minutes. Let cool in pans for 10 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Spread Spiced Buttercream between layers and on top and sides of cake. Sprinkle with remaining one-fourth of persimmons and remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (50 grams) coconut. Garnish with sage, if desired

SPICED BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 4 cups

- 8 ounces (225 grams) cream cheese, softened
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 tablespoon (14 grams) all-vegetable shortening
- 5 cups (600 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 1 tablespoon (9 grams) lime zest
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) fresh lime juice
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) Chinese five-spice powder
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat cream cheese, butter, and shortening at medium speed until smooth. Add confectioners' sugar, lime zest and juice, five-spice powder, and cinnamon, beating until combined.



Spiced Persimmon
Coconut Cake





CRANBERRY STREUSEL BUNDT

Makes 1 (10-cup) Bundt cake

The tartness of cranberries, ribbons of streusel, and rich, buttery crumb coupled with the fresh nutmeg and fragrant five-spice blend will both surprise and delight your holiday guests. Without being too obvious, the addition of five-spice adds warmth and pizzazz to the cake and streusel. One of my favorite things about this cake is its versatility because it could just as easily grace a holiday brunch table as it could finish an elegant dinner. Fresh cranberries are ideal, but frozen will work in a pinch. If using frozen, don't defrost before folding into the batter.

- 4 large eggs (200 grams), room temperature
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams), room temperature
- 1½ cups (300 grams) granulated sugar
- 1½ cups (360 grams) sour cream, room temperature
- ¼ cup (168 grams) vegetable oil
- 1½ tablespoons (9 grams) orange zest
- 1½ tablespoons (19.5 grams) pure vanilla extract
- 2½ cups (333 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) baking powder
- 1½ teaspoons (3 grams) ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) Chinese five-spice powder
- ¼ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon grated fresh nutmeg
- ½ cup (120 grams) 1% low-fat milk
- 2½ cups (382.5 grams) fresh or frozen cranberries

Spiced Streusel (recipe follows)

Citrus Glaze (recipe follows)

Garnish: Cranberry Powder (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Heavily butter and flour a 10-cup Bundt pan.*
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat eggs, egg yolk, and sugar at medium speed until light and fluffy, about 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl, if necessary. With mixer on low speed, add sour cream, oil, zest, and vanilla. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until combined.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, cinnamon, five-spice powder, salt, and nutmeg. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to egg mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition. Fold in cranberries.

4. Pour one-third of batter into prepared pan. Sprinkle with half of Spiced Streusel. Add another one-third of batter, and sprinkle with remaining Spiced Streusel. Pour remaining batter on top, using a spatula to spread over Spiced Streusel. (Pan will be very full.) Gently tap pan on counter several times to release any air bubbles.

5. Bake until a wooden pick inserted near center comes out clean, 1 hour and 10 minutes to 1 hour and 15 minutes. Let cool in pan for 30 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on a wire rack. Pour Citrus Glaze over cooled cake, letting glaze drizzle down sides. Dust with Cranberry Powder, if desired.

*We used the Nordic Ware Heritage Bundt pan.

SPICED STREUSEL

Makes about ½ cup

- ½ cup (42 grams) all-purpose flour
- ½ cup (67 grams) granulated sugar
- 1½ tablespoons (21 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon (6 grams) ground cinnamon
- 1½ teaspoons (3 grams) Chinese five-spice powder
- 1½ tablespoons (21 grams) unsalted butter, softened

1. In a small bowl, whisk together flour, sugars, cinnamon, and five-spice powder. Use your fingers to work butter into flour mixture until it has the texture of dry sand.

CITRUS GLAZE

Makes about 1 cup

- 2½ cups (270 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 1 teaspoon to 1 tablespoon (2 to 6 grams) orange zest
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) fresh orange juice
- 1 to 3 tablespoons (15 to 45 grams) whole milk

1. In a small bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar and orange zest and juice until smooth. Add milk, 1 teaspoon (2 grams) at a time, until desired consistency is reached.

CRANBERRY POWDER

Makes about ¼ cup

- ½ cup (7 grams) freeze-dried cranberries
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) cornstarch

1. Place cranberries and cornstarch in the work bowl of a food processor; pulse until powdered

FIVE-SPICE MOLASSES COOKIES

Makes 24

Muscovado, an unprocessed cane sugar, is perfect for holiday baking. It lends flavors of molasses, toffee, and caramel that pair wonderfully with a little hit of Chinese five-spice. That rich trio of tastes is the perfect contrast to the spicy notes of cloves, cinnamon, and Szechuan peppercorn found in the blend. Muscovado, which has the consistency of wet sand, has a tendency to clump, so break up any large lumps when creaming it with the butter

- ⅓ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ⅓ cup (110 grams) firmly packed dark muscovado*
- ⅓ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar, divided
- ⅓ cup (75 grams) sunflower seed or other neutral oil
- ⅓ cup (113 grams) unsulphured molasses
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
- 1 tablespoon (13 grams) vanilla extract
- 1½ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 cup (127 grams) bread flour
- 1 tablespoon (6 grams) ground ginger
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking soda
- 2 teaspoons (4 grams) Chinese five-spice powder
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- ⅓ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cloves
- ⅓ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cardamom

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, muscovado, ⅓ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar, and oil at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With mixer on low speed, add molasses, eggs, and vanilla, beating until combined

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flours, ginger, baking soda, five-spice powder, cinnamon, salt, cloves, and cardamom. Fold flour mixture into butter mixture just until combined. Wrap dough tightly in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 3 days. (This dough is sticky; do not skip this step.)

3. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C), and place rack in top third of oven. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper

4. Place remaining ⅓ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar in a shallow bowl. Using a 1-tablespoon scoop, scoop dough, and roll into balls. Roll balls in granulated sugar, coating completely. Place 2 inches apart on prepared pan.

5. Bake for 10 minutes. (You want to slightly undercook these.) Let cool on pan for 5 to 10 minutes. Remove from pan, and let cool completely on wire racks.

**You can easily substitute dark brown sugar for the muscovado.*

PINK PEPPERCORN MADELEINES WITH FIVE-SPICE POMEGRANATE GLAZE

Makes 20

When I lived in Beijing, my family and I would often go to the bar at Maison Boulud, in the city's Legation Quarter, where the bartenders served up madeleines with cocktails. This recipe reminds me of that beautiful, now-defunct bar. Instead of the traditional melted butter, I use softened butter for extra lift and a cake-like texture. You'll know your butter is perfectly softened when it's easily smeared on a plate.

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (133 grams) granulated sugar
 - 1 teaspoon (3 grams) pink peppercorns
 - 2 large eggs (100 grams), room temperature
 - 1 tablespoon (15 grams) whole milk, room temperature
 - 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
 - $\frac{3}{8}$ cup (84 grams) all-purpose flour
 - 1 tablespoon (8 grams) cornstarch
 - 1 tablespoon (9 grams) orange zest
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (2.5 grams) baking powder
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) sea salt
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened and cubed
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (30 grams) confectioners' sugar
- Five-Spice Pomegranate Glaze (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Butter and flour 20 madeleine pan wells. Freeze for at least 5 minutes
2. In the work bowl of a food processor, place granulated sugar and peppercorns; process until finely ground. (The sugar will have the appearance of confectioners' sugar with flecks of peppercorns.)
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat sugar mixture and eggs at high speed until pale yellow and thick, about 5 minutes. With mixer on low speed, add milk and vanilla; beat for 1 minute
4. In a small bowl, whisk together flour, cornstarch, zest, baking powder, and salt. With mixer on medium-low speed, add flour mixture and butter to sugar mixture; beat for 1 minute (Mixture will be smooth and creamy with some small butter chunks visible.)

5. Place about 1 tablespoon batter in each prepared madeleine well. (They should be between halfway and three-fourths full. Place batter in deep end of each well, not the middle. Do not smooth or flatten.) Place madeleine pans back in freezer for 5 minutes. Move directly from freezer to center of oven.
6. Bake for 8 minutes. Rotate pans, and bake until golden around the edges and puffed up in the middle, 3 to 4 minutes more. Let cool in pans for 1 minute. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Sift with confectioners' sugar. Dip top edge of each cookie in Five-Spice Pomegranate Glaze. These cookies are best eaten the day they are baked.

FIVE-SPICE POMEGRANATE GLAZE

Makes about $\frac{1}{2}$ cup

- 1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) pomegranate juice
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon Chinese five-spice powder
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) whole milk (optional)

1. In a small bowl, whisk together confectioners' sugar, pomegranate juice, and five-spice powder. Add milk to thin, if necessary.

SATSUMA MARMALADE HAND PIES

Makes 8

This combination of slightly bitter marmalade, aromatic five-spice, and buttery crust is spine tingling. Most marmalade is comprised of the entire fruit. Here, I use only one satsuma in its entirety and utilize the zest and meat of the remaining fruit for a less bitter filling.

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (80 grams) cold water
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) cold vodka
 - 3 cups (375 grams) all-purpose flour
 - 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar
 - 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
 - 1 cup (227 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (57 grams) cold all-vegetable shortening
- Satsuma Marmalade (recipe follows)
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams)
 - 2 tablespoons (30 grams) heavy whipping cream or whole milk

1. In a measuring cup, stir together $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (80 grams) cold water and vodka. Freeze for 5 minutes
2. In a large bowl, whisk together flour, sugar, and salt until combined. Using a pastry blender, cut in cold butter and shortening until mixture

- is crumbly. (Do not overmix.) Drizzle vodka mixture over flour mixture, and press with the back of a spatula to bring dough together. Using your hands, gently press dough together.
3. Turn out dough, and divide in half. Shape each half into a disk, and wrap tightly in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 1 hour.
 4. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
 5. Let dough stand at room temperature until slightly softened, about 15 minutes. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thickness. Using a $3\frac{3}{4}$ -inch round cutter, cut 16 rounds. Using a small star-shaped cutter, cut centers from half of rounds.
 6. Spoon about $1\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoons Satsuma Marmalade onto center of each solid round, leaving a $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch border. Lightly moisten border of each pie, and top with rounds with cutouts. Using the tines of a fork, press down edges to crimp. Place pies on prepared pan, and freeze for 15 minutes.
 7. In a small bowl, whisk together egg yolk and cream. Lightly brush egg wash over pies.
 8. Bake for 20 to 25 minutes. Let cool before serving

SATSUMA MARMALADE

Makes about $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups

- $\frac{3}{4}$ pound (340 grams) satsumas or tangerines
- 1 lemon (99 grams)
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (360 grams) water
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (300 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) minced peeled apple
- 1 (1-inch) piece ginger (8 grams), peeled
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1 gram) Chinese five-spice powder

1. Clean and scrub fruit. Thinly slice 1 whole satsuma (peel plus fruit). Cut slices into quarters, and place in a medium saucepan. Zest remaining satsumas and lemon directly into pan. Remove and discard remaining white satsuma skin, and place fruit in pan. For lemon, remove outer skin, and place residual fruit in pan. Discard any excess pith and seeds.
2. Add $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (360 grams) water, sugar, apple, ginger, and five-spice powder, and bring to a boil over medium-high heat. Boil until mixture has darkened and thickened, about 35 minutes. Using kitchen shears, cut up any large chunks of fruit into bite-size pieces. Discard ginger. Let cool completely. Refrigerate until chilled. ☐



Cherry, Almond,
Pistachio, and
Honey Nougat
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NAVIGATE YOUR WAY THROUGH THE TRECKIEST-AND STRECKIEST-ELEMENTS
OF CANDY MAKING WITH THESE STRAIGHTFORWARD RECIPES

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHANIE STEELE / RECIPE DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD STYLING BY ELIZABETH STRINGER / STYLING BY SIDNEY BRAGIEL





PRO TIP

If it turns out too soft, or just too soft for your personal preference, you can simply remelt your Turkish delight and continue cooking it until it has thickened enough to your liking.



HANDLE WITH CARE

Durable and with a long shelf life, confections make excellent edible gifts to send to far-flung family and friends. Follow our tips to make sure the fruits of your labor arrive intact and in style.

CANDIES NEED SPACE

If you cram your candies together, you're risking a major meltdown. In order to make sure 20 cute candies don't become one giant blob, try to keep everything from touching. Use wax paper or parchment paper as a divider if you plan on stacking up your confections.

TINS, THE CONTAINERS OF CHOICE

Decorative and sturdy, tins protect your candy in style, but they aren't perfectly airtight. To keep it pretty and functional, seal your tins in gallon resealable plastic bags before placing them into your mailing box. Once the candy is delivered, your lucky recipient can discard the bags and enjoy.

WE LIKE BIG BOXES (AND WE CANNOT LIE)

Buy a bigger box than your tin—at least 2 inches greater in length, width, and height—and pack the extra space with Styrofoam peanuts or bubble wrap. This creates an extra layer of insulation and cushion from outside heat and clumsy handling.

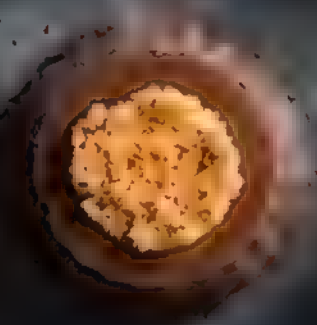
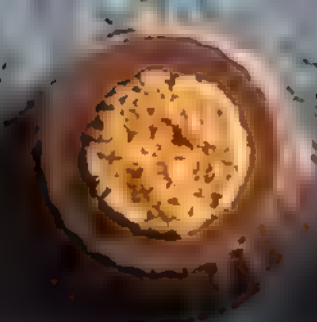
TAPE THE SEAMS

It may seem over the top, but taping over all the slits of the mailing box will keep outside air (hot, humid, or otherwise) from getting to your confection. The less air exposure, the better the candy.

SPURGE FOR PRIORITY SHIPPING

The added cost of priority (2–3 day) shipping may seem a little steep, sometimes costing over \$20 more than standard shipping, but when you weigh it against the tragedy of spoiling the baking you worked so hard on, it'll more than justify the extra charge. Look for flat-rate boxes offered at USPS, which will often ship with a reduced rate for Priority. For international shipping, check with shipping company for details and restrictions.





Cookie Butter Buffles
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COOKIE BUTTER TRUFFLES

Makes about 48

Cookie butter, much like peanut butter, pulverizes a good thing (Biscoff Cookies) into an addictive spread. These truffles double down on the Biscoff flavor with alternating layers of Cookie Butter Ganache and straight cookie butter. Try not to get too attached—these truffles will be the first to disappear at your holiday get-together.

1½ (12-ounce) bags (510 grams) 66% cacao semisweet chocolate baking wafers*

Cookie Butter Ganache (recipe follows)

1 cup (256 grams) cookie butter*

Garnish: Biscoff Cookie crumbs or melted white chocolate

1. In the top of a double boiler, melt chocolate baking wafers over simmering water. (Alternately, in a large microwave-safe bowl, microwave chocolate on half power in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until chocolate is melted and smooth.) Fill 4 (12-cavity) silicone or plastic truffle molds** with melted chocolate. (For white chocolate garnish, pipe a small amount of white chocolate into molds before filling with melted chocolate. Let dry.) Turn over molds, emptying chocolate into a bowl. Let chocolate drip out until you can see outlines on bottoms of molds when the molds are turned over. Let truffle molds set slightly, and scrap off excess with a bench scraper. Let set completely, right side up.

2. Place Cookie Butter Ganache and cookie butter in 2 separate pastry bags fitted with medium-size round tips. Fill chocolate shells halfway full with Cookie Butter Ganache, and top with cookie butter (do not fill completely). Freeze for 10 minutes. Reheat reserved melted chocolate until smooth, if necessary. Spread melted chocolate over molds to form bottom, scraping off excess with a bench scraper. Freeze for 10 minutes.

3. Remove truffles from molds, and clean any rough edges using a sharp paring knife. Using a fork or a piping tip as a template, garnish with Biscoff Cookie crumbs, if desired. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks.

*We used Guittard Semisweet Chocolate Baking Wafers and Biscoff Cookie Butter.

**We used Webake Silicone Chocolate Molds and Zicome Non-Stick Silicone Molds, available on amazon.com

COOKIE BUTTER GANACHE

Makes 2 cups

1½ cups (227 grams) 62% cacao dark chocolate morsels*

½ cup (85 grams) cookie butter*

2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, softened

¼ cup plus 1 tablespoon (195 grams) heavy whipping cream

1. In a medium bowl, combine chocolate, cookie butter, and butter.

2. In a small saucepan, bring cream to a boil over medium-high heat. Immediately pour hot cream over chocolate mixture; let stand for 1 minute. Whisk gently until combined and shiny. Cover and let cool to room temperature. Refrigerate for up to 2 weeks.

*We used Scharffen Berger Dark Chocolate Baking Chunks and Biscoff Cookie Butter.

ESPRESSO AND CACAO CARAMELS

Makes about 120 pieces

Our homemade soft caramel merges luscious dark chocolate and a bite of espresso for an energized take on the chewy original. To bring a touch of crunchy texture, we added a salty-bitter topping of Maldon sea salt and coarse cacao nibs.

¾ cup (113 grams) chopped 70% bittersweet chocolate*

1 cup plus 2 tablespoons (270 grams) heavy whipping cream

¾ cup plus 1 tablespoon (135 grams) sweetened condensed milk

1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar

½ cup (170 grams) golden syrup*

½ cup (170 grams) light corn syrup

¼ cup (60 grams) water

¼ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, softened

1 tablespoon (6 grams) espresso powder

½ tablespoon (9 grams) vanilla bean paste

½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) Maldon sea salt

½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) cacao nibs, finely chopped

1. Line a 13x9-inch metal baking pan with parchment paper, and spray with cooking spray.
2. In a medium bowl, place chocolate. In a small saucepan, heat cream and condensed milk over low heat, stirring until combined. Pour hot cream mixture over chocolate; let stand for 1 minute. Whisk until combined; cover and keep warm.

3. In a medium saucepan, heat sugar, golden syrup, corn syrup, and ¼ cup (60 grams) water over low heat, stirring occasionally, until sugar is dissolved. Increase heat to medium, and cook, without stirring, until mixture registers 240°F (116°C) on a candy thermometer, about 10 minutes. Remove from heat, and carefully stir in cream mixture. Return to heat, and cook, stirring constantly, until mixture registers 240°F (116°C) on a candy thermometer, about 20 minutes. Remove from heat, and add butter, espresso powder, and vanilla bean paste. Immediately pour into prepared pan. Let stand for 5 minutes.

4. In a small bowl, stir together salt and cacao nibs. Sprinkle over caramel. Cover with plastic wrap, and let stand overnight.

5. Using a sharp knife, cut into 1½x½-inch pieces; wrap in wax paper. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

*We used Valrhona Guanaja Feves Bitter 70% and Tate & Lyle's Golden Syrup.

CRANBERRY PECAN DIVINITY

Makes about 40 pieces

A Southern candy classic, divinity walks the fine line between rich fudge and fluffy marshmallow. Though traditionally formed into homey spoon-drop bites, we piped the confection into a clean circle, topping with a pecan half to create a sweet sugary button hiding a surprise note of tart cranberry flavor.

2½ cups (500 grams) granulated sugar

½ cup (170 grams) light corn syrup

½ cup (120 grams) water

¼ teaspoon kosher salt

2 large egg whites (60 grams)

¼ teaspoon cream of tartar

1½ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract

1 cup (128 grams) chopped dried cranberries

40 pecan halves, toasted

1. Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper. Lightly spray with cooking spray.

2. In a large saucepan, stir together sugar, corn syrup, ½ cup (120 grams) water, and salt until combined. Cook over medium heat, without stirring, until mixture registers 258°F (126°C) on a candy thermometer.

3. Meanwhile, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg whites at medium high speed until foamy. Add cream of tartar, and beat until stiff peaks form. Remove sugar mixture from heat, and stir in vanilla. With mixer on high speed, add hot sugar mixture to egg whites in a slow, steady stream, avoiding whisk. Beat until mixture thickens and begins to lose its gloss, 5 to 9 minutes, depending on humidity. (The lower the humidity, the less time this step will take. Watch closely—do not overmix, or it will stiffen.)

4. Working quickly, add cranberries, stirring to combine. Spoon mixture into a pastry bag fitted with a large round tip. Pipe small rounds onto prepared pans. After every fourth or fifth row piped, place a pecan on top of each piece, and press in slightly. Let stand until dry and can be removed easily from pans. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 month.

ORANGE AND CAMPARI TURKISH DELIGHT

Makes about 30 pieces

Though inspired by the floral jelly classic of the former Ottoman empire, our Turkish Delight trades the signature rosewater for a sunburst of orange flavor. A shot of Campari brings a complementary bitter citrus note that cuts through the sweetness and adds a cast of pastel pink that recalls the rosy Turkish original.

2½ cups (600 grams) cold water, divided
¼ cup (96 grams) cornstarch
3 cups (600 grams) granulated sugar
¼ cup (85 grams) light corn syrup
1 tablespoon (15 grams) Campari
2 teaspoons (8 grams) pure orange extract
Confectioners' sugar, for dusting

1. Line a 9-inch square metal baking pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan. Butter and flour pan.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together ½ cup (120 grams) water and cornstarch until dissolved. Transfer to a large saucepan, and add remaining 2 cups (480 grams) water. Cook over medium heat, stirring frequently, until mixture turns opaque and has thickened. Add granulated sugar and corn syrup, and cook until mixture turns translucent. Cook, stirring constantly, until mixture becomes very

gelatinous and hard to stir, 20 to 25 minutes. (To test mixture, place a small amount on a plate, and let cool. Mixture should easily hold its shape, be slightly firm to the touch, and should not be sticky.) Stir in Campari and orange extract; pour into prepared pan.

3. Cover with a piece of plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface; smooth with a spatula. Wrap pan in plastic wrap, and let cool for at least 6 hours or overnight

4. Gently peel off plastic wrap. Using excess parchment as handles, remove candy from pan. Using a sharp knife, cut into 1½-inch squares. Toss each piece in confectioners' sugar to coat. Sprinkle equal parts confectioners' sugar and cornstarch in bottom of an airtight container (to keep candy from sticking together). Store candy in airtight container for up to 1 month.

CHERRY, ALMOND, PISTACHIO, AND HONEY NOUGAT

Makes about 5 bars or 30 pieces

Nougat De Montélimar is a chewy nougat candy from the south of France that's included in Les Treize Desserts de Noel, the 13 desserts served during a traditional Provençal Christmas. While paying homage to the original combination of pistachios, almonds, and cherries, we included a warm note of caramelized honey. Making nougat is a team sport, so invite a second set of hands to help maneuver the sticky sweet.

1½ cups (187 grams) whole almonds
1½ cups (187 grams) whole pistachios
1 cup (336 grams) honey
1¼ cups (350 grams) granulated sugar
½ cup (170 grams) light corn syrup
½ cup (120 grams) water
1 tablespoon (15 grams) amaretto
1 teaspoon (4 grams) almond extract
3 large egg whites (90 grams), room temperature
½ teaspoon (1 gram) cream of tartar
1 cup (128 grams) dried cherries

1. Preheat oven to 300°F (150°C).
2. Place almonds and pistachios on a small baking sheet. Bake for 12 minutes. Turn oven off, and leave nuts in oven to keep warm.
3. Line an 8-inch square metal baking pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan.
4. In a small saucepan, bring honey to a boil over medium heat. Boil until mixture registers 252°F (122°C) on a candy thermometer.
5. In another small saucepan, heat sugar, corn syrup, and ½ cup (120 grams) water over medium heat. Cook until mixture registers 295°F (146°C)

on a candy thermometer. Remove from heat; stir in amaretto and almond extract.

6. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat egg whites at medium speed until foamy. Add cream of tartar, and beat until stiff peaks form. Add hot honey in a slow, steady stream until combined, about 3 minutes. Switch to the paddle attachment. With mixer on medium-high speed, add hot sugar mixture in a slow, steady stream, and beat for 15 to 25 minutes, depending on humidity. The longer the nougat is mixed, the harder the end product will be. If you want a softer nougat, mix for only 10 to 15 minutes. Nougat is ready when you can pinch off a small amount and roll it between your fingers without it sticking once cooled. (Be careful, your nougat will still be quite hot.)

7. Add warm nuts, and stir well with a greased spatula. (Nougat should be very thick and very hard to stir.) Sprinkle half of cherries in prepared pan. Using a greased plastic bench scraper, add half of nougat. Press down with greased hands. Sprinkle with remaining cherries. Add remaining nougat, and smooth top with a greased spatula. Cover with parchment paper, and press down with bench scraper to further smooth top and square edges. Let stand overnight. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan. Using a sharp knife, cut into 5 equal bars or 30 square pieces. Wrap in wax paper, and tie string around the ends. Store in an airtight container for up to 1 month

PRO TIP

The success of this nougat recipe is dependent on the humidity. It must be lower than 50 percent. To combat humidity, try blowing the nougat with a hair dryer on high heat while it is being mixed in the stand mixer. The warm heat should remove any excess moisture. 📌



the GINGERBREAD HOUSE of your dreams

MAKE A SHOWSTOPPING GINGERBREAD HOUSE WITH EXPERT ADVICE FROM THE GUYS BEHIND CHARLESTON'S SUGAR BAKESHOP, A PAIR OF ARCHITECTS-TURNED-BAKERS WHO PUT A SOUTHERN TWIST ON A BELOVED HOLIDAY TRADITION

BY SOPHIA JONES

In Charleston, South Carolina, the Lowcountry culture is as buoyant and vivid as the historic, pastel-colored architecture that lines the city's streets. Even the gingerbread houses seem to sparkle with a charm all their own. As the holiday season amps up, architects-turned-bakers Bill Bowick and David Bouffard bedeck Sugar Bakeshop's front windows with a gleaming gingerbread house built in the style of the city's signature single house. Known for their narrow street-facing facade, single houses have sprawling, covered side porches that span the length of the structure—the perfect spot for enjoying a mild Carolina winter's eve. To let their customers get in on the holiday house-building action, the duo created a gingerbread single house kit that they sell from the bakery every holiday season. The DIY kit includes candies, a royal icing recipe, and the baked gingerbread pieces packaged and ready for patrons to assemble and twirl up into their own stylish single house. If you can't get to Charleston to pick up one of these kits for yourself, don't fret. Here, Bill and David share everything you need to know (including a blueprint!) to help you master gingerbread house-making, from mixing the dough to placing the final garnish.

Tools You'll Need

- Template pieces (Available to download and print at bakefromscratch.com/gingerbread-house.)
- Stiff cardboard to use as gingerbread templates
- Base for the house (Use a flat cake stand or a stiff 12-inch cardboard cake round)
- Holiday cookie cutters (optional)
- Sharp chef's knife
- Pastry brush
- Piping bag
- #10 piping tip

- #2 piping tip
- Glasses or canned goods to help stabilize house while drying
- Decorating tweezers (Available in most stores' baking sections or online)
- Two 10-inch wooden skewers
- Four 6-inch candy canes with curved top
- Candy and/or nuts of your choice for garnishes

House Pieces

- 2 side elevations
- 1 front elevation (include side porch)
- 1 rear elevation (omit side porch)
- 1 roof piece
- 1 roof piece (omit cutouts)
- 1 porch roof
- 2 chimneys

PRO TIP

You can pipe the windows, shutters, and door on the house before you put the pieces together. This will prevent icing from dripping, which sometimes occurs while decorating the house once it's built. After templates have baked and cooled, pipe windows and shutters. Let dry for 30 minutes before constructing house.



GINGERBREAD HOUSE

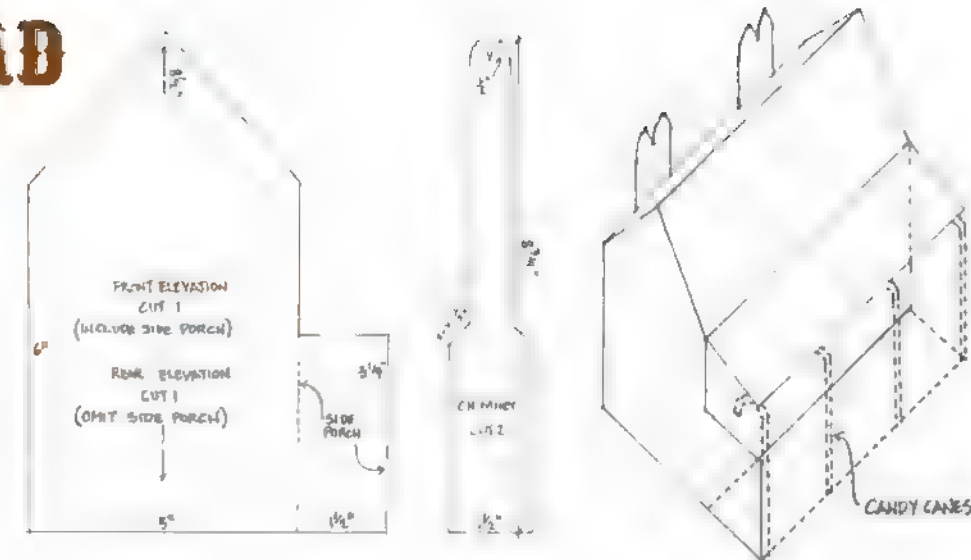
Makes dough for 1 gingerbread house

Whether you're planning a weeks-long living room showcase or can't resist chowing down on your house after a day or two, this gingerbread house is tasty and sturdy. Bill and David spent months in Sugar Bakeshop's kitchen testing and developing an all-purpose gingerbread dough that is tender and delicious enough to eat—it has the perfect amount of spice—but strong enough for construction.

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 1 cup (220 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (226 grams) molasses
- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (344 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder
- 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoons (6.25 grams) baking soda
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cloves
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground ginger
- $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground allspice

Royal Icing (recipe follows)

1. Visit bakefromscratch.com/gingerbread-house to download and print the true-to-scale template pieces for the house. Cut out each template piece, and trace the shapes onto stiff cardboard. Cut outlined template pieces from cardboard.
2. To make the dough, in the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and brown sugar at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg, beating well. Beat in molasses.
3. In a medium bowl, sift together flour, baking powder, baking soda, cinnamon, cloves, ginger, salt, and allspice. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until combined. Shape dough into a disk, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 8 hours or overnight.
4. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
5. Divide dough in half, and return one half to refrigerator. Place other half on a lightly floured sheet of parchment paper. Top with a second sheet of parchment paper, and roll dough to $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thickness. Remove the top sheet of parchment.



6. Brush cardboard templates with flour so they do not stick to dough. Gently place 2 side elevation, front elevation, and rear elevation templates over dough. Using a sharp knife, cut around templates. Instead of pulling knife, press directly up and down so knife doesn't pull the dough too much and the templates will stay in shape. Using a pastry brush, dust any excess flour off dough. Pull away dough scraps to be rerolled.

7. To cut out a porch door on the side of the house, choose which side elevation you want to build the porch on. Cut a 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ x1-inch rectangle out of the center of one of the long (7 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch) edges. You will attach this edge to your base.

8. Transfer dough and parchment paper to a baking sheet, if any pieces shift during transfer, use the end of the spatula to gently reshape. Use a pastry brush to gently dust off any excess flour.

9. Roll remaining dough to $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thickness. Use templates to cut out remaining pieces of house. Use holiday cookie cutters* to cut out a star for the roof of the house, gingerbread people, and fir trees to place around the house.

10. Transfer pieces to baking sheets. Freeze for 10 minutes. Bake until crisp, 15 to 20 minutes. Let cool completely, about 30 minutes. (Do not use wire rack to cool pieces. It will prevent them from drying as flat as possible.) Once pieces are removed from oven, dust again with a pastry brush so that they are as clean as possible to help them attach better when constructing the house. Gingerbread can be baked up to 2 days in advance and stored in an airtight container until ready to construct house. Dough can be frozen for up to 1 month.

11. Construct house, and decorate with Royal Icing. Your gingerbread house should last up to 2 months. You can enjoy eating your completed house for up to 1 week after you build it.

*We like the Wilton Holiday Cookie Cutter Set available on amazon.com

ROYAL ICING

Makes 3 cups

This is basically glue you can eat. It is the mortar, paint, and most important tool in building a gingerbread house. Bill and David use less water in the icing that holds the house together, which makes it stronger, and put a little more water in the icing used to decorate the house, which makes it more pliable.

- 4 cups (480 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 5 tablespoons (35 grams) meringue powder
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (80 grams) plus $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon (7.5 grams) cold water, divided

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat confectioners' sugar and meringue powder at low speed until combined. Switch to the paddle attachment. With mixer on medium speed, add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (80 grams) water in a slow, steady stream, beating until thick and fluffy, about 3 minutes. Remove $\frac{1}{2}$ cups icing from bowl, and spoon into a piping bag fitted with a #10 piping tip. You will use this icing to hold the main pieces of the house together.

2. Add remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ tablespoon (7.5 grams) water to remaining $\frac{1}{2}$ cups icing, and beat until combined. Spoon icing into a piping bag fitted with a #2 piping tip. You will use this icing to decorate the house. Icing will keep refrigerated for up to 24 hours. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface of icing to prevent it from hardening. (It will become lumpy and dry if exposed to the air for too long.) Let icing come to room temperature before using.



CONSTRUCT THE HOUSE

1. We recommend you put the four main sides of the house together the day before you build the rest of the house so that there's ample time for the icing to harden and the base frame to become sturdier. Use a #10 piping tip to construct the house. Pipe a generous line of Royal Icing along the 7½-inch bottom of one of the side elevations. Secure it to the base, propping it up against a glass or a canned good.
2. Pipe another wide band of Royal Icing along the bottom inside edge of the side elevation to help reinforce it. Repeat this process with the side elevation so that the walls of the two pieces meet. Reinforce inside edge with more Royal Icing, if necessary. Make sure the walls are at a right angle before the icing starts to set.
3. Repeat this process with the second side elevation and rear elevation. Leave each of the four pieces propped up by glasses or canned goods for a few hours or overnight so that they have adequate time to set up.

INSTALL THE ROOF

1. Place roof piece with cutouts for the chimneys first. Pipe Royal Icing on top edges of side elevation, front elevation, and rear elevation that will attach to roof piece. Place roof piece. Pipe more Royal Icing along the inside seam where the side elevation and roof piece meet to reinforce it.
2. Place two skewers in the interior of the house underneath the roof piece to help support it. Use scissors to cut the skewers down to the appropriate height before placing them. (You will need to cut off about 2 inches.)
3. Let roof panel dry in place for 30 minutes

before installing the second roof panel without cutouts.

4. Pipe Royal Icing on top edges of side elevation, front elevation, and rear elevation that will attach to second roof piece. Pipe icing on top edge of roof piece, and place it. Let dry for 30 minutes before installing porch roof.

INSTALL THE PORCH ROOF

1. Candy canes will support the porch roof. Place four candy canes equally spaced along house with the curve facing directly into the house. To secure each candy cane, pipe a dot of Royal Icing on the surface of the bottom of the candy cane. Pipe another short line on the side elevation where the top portion of the candy cane will attach to the house. Line candy cane up with icing, gently pressing top portion into house to attach. Repeat.
2. Pipe a generous line of Royal Icing along long side of porch roof and attach to the house. Pipe with more Royal Icing along seam to reinforce.

PLACE THE CHIMNEYS

1. Chimneys will go on the opposite side of the house, lined up in the cutouts of the roof panel. Pipe a generous amount of Royal Icing along edges of cutouts and the side of the house where you will place first chimney.
2. Attach chimney. Repeat with second chimney. Let house dry for 30 minutes before garnishing.

DECORATE YOUR HOUSE

1. Switch to a #2 piping tip for decorating the house. Pipe windows and shutters on each side of the house. To make it a true Charleston single house, be sure to pipe a front door on the side porch of the front elevation. (Have a damp cloth on hand to catch any icing mistakes and to keep your hands clean. You can also hide any icing mistakes with candy and garnishes.)
2. To garnish your house, we suggest using whatever ingredients you may have readily available. Decorating tweezers are great to have on hand to place garnishes. Pipe a little icing, and use the decorating tweezers to place and hold garnish on icing for a few seconds or longer while it sets.
3. We garnished this house with jelly beans, Life Savers, peppermints, and gumdrops. We used a green Life Savers Wreath (recipe follows) for the door and red and yellow gumdrops to make Gumdrops Candles (recipe follows) for the windows.
4. Decorate the roof last. Any candy or nut that can be shingled can be used on the roof. We used pecans, beloved in Charleston and grown throughout the Southeast, if you are

layering candy or nuts to look like shingles, start from the bottom. Complete one layer at a time, alternating pieces so they overlap.

5. Leave a small space around the outer edges of the roof if you would like to use another candy to look like colorful Christmas lights. Line various alternating colors of jelly beans or gumdrops along the edges of the roof.
6. To create icicles hanging from the edge of the roof, use a #2 piping tip to pipe a dot of icing. Use the tip to slightly pull the dot down so it appears to be dripping. Repeat across the edge of piece. (Place paper below the piece to catch any drips.)
7. Use Royal Icing to attach star to roof of house, tree cutouts to sides, and gingerbread people cutouts on the porch. We love how the gingerbread men and women set the "scene." Sprigs of rosemary make for fun greenery to go around the sides of the house, too. To give the look of freshly fallen snow, dust house with confectioners' sugar.

GUMDROP CANDLES

Makes 14

Make these tiny candles to place in each window

- 2 red gumdrops
- 2 yellow gumdrops

1. Using a rolling pin, roll out red and yellow gumdrops to flatten. Cut red gumdrops into 14 (2½x¾-centimeter) strips. Using a Wilton #102 petal piping tip, cut 14 teardrop shapes out of yellow gumdrops. Using decorative tweezers, place candles and flames onto the center of bottom of edge in each gingerbread window.

LIFE SAVERS WREATH

Makes 1

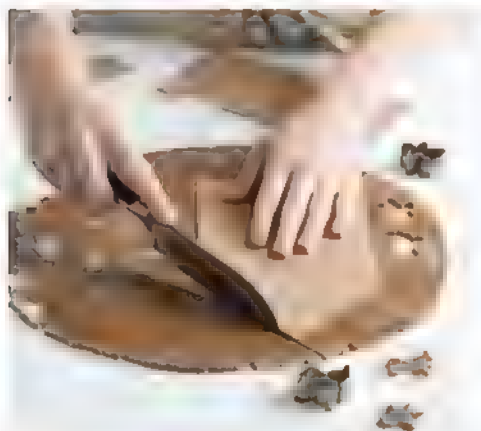
Place this candy wreath on the front door

- 1 red gumdrop
- 1 green Life Savers candy

1. Using a rolling pin, roll out gumdrop to flatten. Using a Wilton #10 round piping tip, cut out 2 circles. Using a Wilton #3 round piping tip, cut a circle out of each disk. Using a paring knife, cut 2 (2½x¾-centimeter) strips out of gumdrop. Using decorative icing from gingerbread house, apply both rings and strips to Life Savers Candy to create a decorative bow. Using decorative tweezers, place wreath in center of gingerbread door on front elevation side porch.

Construction Tips from the Pros

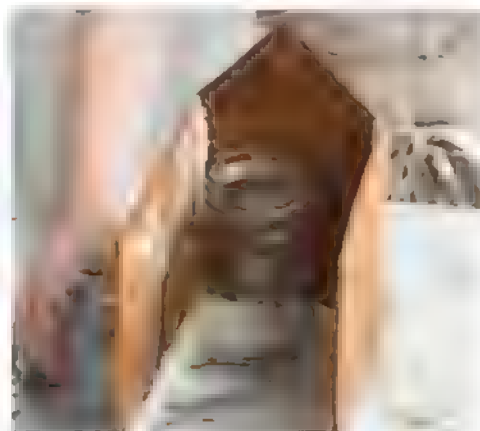
Follow Bit and Dav d's tips for a smooth building process and a handsome house every time



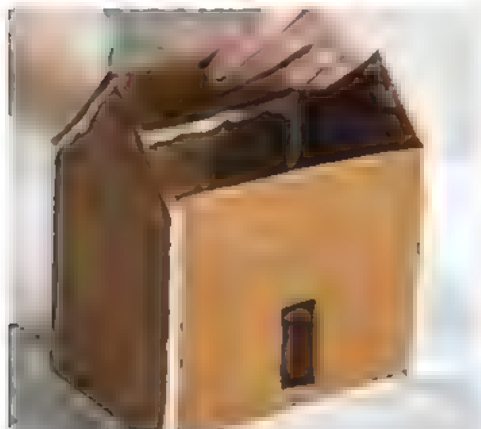
1. Before putting your cardboard template over the dough, brush with flour so it does not stick to dough. Instead of pulling the knife when cutting, press directly up and down so the knife doesn't drag the dough.



2. Use a #10 piping tip for constructing the house. The larger tip allows you to pipe more generous lines when attaching pieces to the base and each other. This Royal icing has less water in it, so it makes for a sturdier hold.



3. Be sure each corner forms a right angle. Until the Royal icing is dry, glasses or canned goods help keep the four main pieces propped up. Once the house pieces are arranged and propped up, pipe more icing onto the seams, both inside and outside the house, to secure it even more.



4. Place roof piece with cutouts for chimneys first. After attaching, pipe more Royal icing along the inside seam to reinforce it. Let it dry for 30 minutes before installing the second roof panel.



5. After attaching the porch roof to the house, pipe more Royal icing along the seam to reinforce it. As it dries, place a glass or canned good in front of the panel to make sure it's secure.



6. Line chimneys up in the cutouts of the first roof panel you placed. Pipe a generous amount of Royal icing along edges of cutouts and the side of the house where you will place chimneys and attach.



7. A #2 piping tip works best for decorating the house. When piping windows and shutters, have a damp cloth on hand to catch any icing mistakes and to keep your hands clean.



8. Use your favorite candy and nuts to decorate the house. The fun is in the little details, and the key is to have a decorating plan before you start placing candy on the house.



9. Decorating tweezers make placing garnishes a breeze. Make sure you have a plan for where you want each garnish to go before you get started. Use the decorating tweezers to hold the garnish in place for a few seconds or longer while it sets.

the essential...

WREATH





B R E A D

FROM A BABKA-INSPIRED BRAID TO A CIRCULAR PAIN D'ÉPI, OUR RING-SHAPED TAKES ON FOUR NORTHERN EUROPEAN CLASSICS REINVIGORATE YOUR BAKING WITH NEW TECHNIQUES AND FESTIVE FLAVORS

BY SOPHIA JONES

PHOTOGRAPHY BY STEPHANIE STEELE
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD STYLING BY NANCY HUGHES



Norwegian Julekake

Rich, moist, and slightly sweet, *Julekake* is traditionally boule-shaped and flavored with *sukat* (what Norwegians call candied citrus peel), raisins, and cardamom. The bread, whose name loosely translates to “Yule cake,” originated in pre-Christian Norse times. Norwegians would make *Julekake* from one of the last cornhusks in the fall and place it in their homes as decoration through the holiday season. Customarily, they serve the bread during Christmas breakfast with jam and *Brunost*, a Norwegian brown cheese.

Makes 1 (12-inch) wreath

In our babka-inspired take on Julekake, we replaced the raisins with rehydrated cranberries. Instead of mixing the cranberries in with the dough, we created a sweet jam-like filling flavored with cardamom and cinnamon. The Vanilla Glaze falls over every ridge and seeps into each crevice of this updated shape.

- ¾ cup (180 grams) whole milk**
- ¾ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar**
- ¾ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and softened**
- 1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) kosher salt**
- ¾ cup (120 grams) warm water (105°F/40°C to 110°F/43°C)**
- 1 tablespoon (6 grams) instant yeast**
- 2 large eggs (100 grams)**
- 5½ cups (688 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cardamom**
- Cranberry Filling (recipe follows)**
- Candied Lemon Peel (recipe follows), diced**
- Vanilla Glaze (recipe follows)**

1. In a small saucepan, bring milk to a boil over medium heat. Remove from heat, add sugar, butter, and salt, stirring until completely incorporated. Set aside until cooled to 120°F (49°C) to 130°F (54°C).

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment, combine ½ cup (120 grams) warm water and yeast. Add warm milk mixture. Stir in eggs. With mixer on low speed, add flour and cardamom, beating until combined. Increase mixer speed to medium-low, and beat until smooth and elastic, 5 to 7 minutes. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover directly with plastic wrap, and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

3. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.

4. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 24x12-inch rectangle. Spread Cranberry Filling onto dough, leaving a ½-inch border on all sides. Sprinkle with diced Candied Lemon Peel. Starting at one long side, roll up dough, jelly roll

style; press edge to seal. Place on prepared pan.

5. Using a serrated knife, cut roll in half lengthwise. With cut sides facing up, carefully twist dough pieces around each other. Form into a circle, pinching ends to seal. Cover loosely with plastic wrap, and let stand in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) for 30 minutes.

6. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

7. Bake until golden brown and internal temperature registers 190°F (88°C), about 40 minutes. Let cool completely on a wire rack. Drizzle with Vanilla Glaze. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 4 days.

CRANBERRY FILLING

Makes about 1½ cups

- 1½ cups (171 grams) dried cranberries**
- ½ cup (67 grams) granulated sugar**
- 1 tablespoon (14 grams) unsalted butter, cubed**
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cardamom**
- ¼ teaspoon ground cinnamon**

1. In a small saucepan, bring cranberries and water to cover by 1 inch to a boil over high heat. Reduce heat to low, and cook until cranberries are softened, about 20 minutes. Drain cranberries, reserving 2 tablespoons (30 grams) cooking liquid.

2. In the work bowl of a food processor, place warm cranberries, reserved 2 tablespoons (30 grams) cooking liquid, sugar, butter, cardamom, and cinnamon; pulse until mixture has the texture of jam. Let cool completely. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

CANDIED LEMON PEEL

Makes about ¼ cup

- 1 lemon (99 grams)**
- ¾ cup (180 grams) water**
- 1¼ cups (250 grams) granulated sugar, divided**

1. Peel lemon, and slice peel into ¼-inch-thick strips.

2. In a small saucepan, bring peel and water to cover by 1 inch to a boil over medium heat. Boil for 15 minutes. Drain, and rinse with cold water.

3. In same pan, bring ¾ cup (180 grams)

Shape Your Wreath



1. Using a serrated knife, cut roll in half lengthwise. With cut sides facing up, twist dough pieces around each other.



2. Form into a circle, pinching ends to seal.

water and ¾ cup (150 grams) sugar to a boil over medium heat. Add peel. Reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer until peel is softened, 25 to 30 minutes. Drain.

4. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.

5. Toss peel with remaining ½ cup (100 grams) sugar, and place on prepared pan. Let stand until dry, 1 to 2 days. Freeze in an airtight container for up to 2 months.

VANILLA GLAZE

Makes about ¼ cup

- 1 cup (120 grams) confectioners' sugar, sifted**
- ¾ cup (60 grams) heavy whipping cream**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**
- ¼ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt**

1. In a small bowl, whisk together all ingredients until smooth. Use immediately.



Finnish Joululimppu

For Finns, rye bread has been a cultural and nutritional staple for centuries. It was voted Finland's national food for the centenary celebrations of the country's independence this year. Originating in Eastern Finland, *Joululimppu* is traditionally a boule-shaped rye, flavored with dark treacle and orange, and brimming with earthy seeds like fennel and caraway. It has all the nuttiness and chewiness of a traditional rye bread, but it is teeming with the season's flavors of citrus and spice. Buttermilk or whole milk, which are used in most Finnish bread recipes, keeps it moist and sweet. "Joulu" means Christmas and "limppu" translates to a type of bread

Makes 1 (12-inch) wreath

In our wreath-shaped pain d'épi Joululimppu, we used Grand Marnier-rehydrated raisins and molasses in place of the treacle that the traditional recipe calls for. You'll go crazy for the sweet crust brushed with our sticky orange-molasses glaze after baking. We suggest serving warm with some softened salted butter.

- ¼ cup (96 grams) dark raisins**
- ¼ cup (80 grams) water**
- ¼ cup (80 grams) Grand Marnier**
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) plus 1 teaspoon (5 grams) fresh orange juice, divided**
- ¼ cup (85 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (42 grams) molasses, divided**
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) fennel seeds, crushed**
- ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) caraway seeds, crushed**
- 1½ cups (300 grams) whole milk**
- 2½ cups (344 grams) all-purpose flour**
- 1½ cups (153 grams) rye flour**
- 1 tablespoon (6 grams) instant yeast**
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt**
- ¼ cup (57 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and softened**
- ½ cup (85 grams) diced Candied Orange Peel (recipe on page 68)**

- 1.** In a small saucepan, bring raisins, ¼ cup (80 grams) water, Grand Marnier, and 1 teaspoon (5 grams) orange juice to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat, and simmer until liquid's reduced by three-fourths and raisins are plump, about 20 minutes. Drain, and let cool completely.
- 2.** In another small saucepan, bring ¼ cup (85 grams) molasses, fennel seeds, and caraway seeds to a boil over medium heat. Remove from heat; stir in milk. Set aside until cooled to 120°F (49°C) to 130°F (54°C).
- 3.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment, stir together flours,

yeast, and salt. With mixer on low speed, gradually add milk mixture. Increase mixer speed to medium-low, and beat until well combined. Add butter, a few pieces at a time, beating until combined. Add raisins and diced Candied Orange Peel. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until smooth and elastic, about

7 minutes. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover directly with plastic wrap, and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

4. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.

5. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into an 18-inch-long log. Place on prepared pan, and form into a circle, pinch ends to seal.

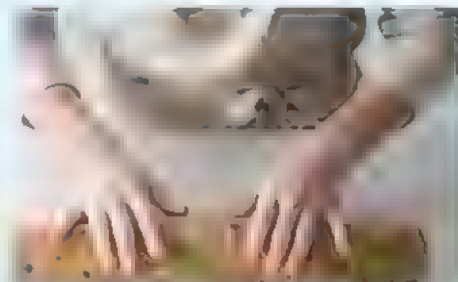
6. Using kitchen scissors, make a 45-degree cut into dough, leaving about ¼ inch of dough uncut. (Be careful not to cut all the way through dough.) Make a second cut 1 inch from first. Make another cut 1 inch from the second. Repeat process until you reach first cut. Gently pull each cut dough piece away from the center of the wreath. Cover loosely with plastic wrap, and let stand in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) for 30 minutes.

7. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).

8. Bake until golden brown and internal temperature registers 190°F (88°C), about 40 minutes. Let cool completely on a wire rack.

9. In a small bowl, whisk together remaining 2 tablespoons (42 grams) molasses and remaining 2 tablespoons (30 grams) orange juice. Brush wreath with molasses glaze. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 4 days.

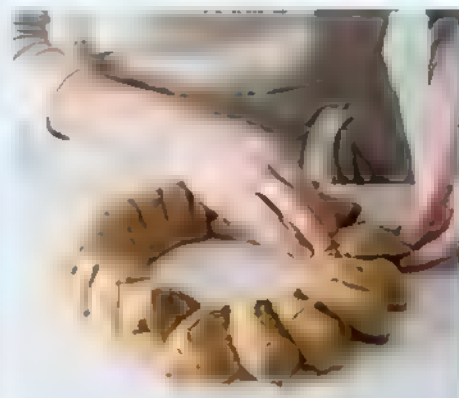
Shape Your Wreath



- 1.** On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into an 18-inch-long log.



- 2.** Make 45-degree cuts into dough, leaving about ¼ inch of dough uncut.



- 3.** Gently pull each cut dough piece away from the center of the wreath.



Swedish Saffranskrans

In this brilliant golden wreath, the standard holiday spices of cinnamon, clove, and nutmeg take a knee to saffron. For centuries, Sweden was a prominent trade center on the northern land route of the global spice trade known as the “Silk Road” that connected Asia, the Middle East, North Africa, and Europe. As a result, saffron, which is native to Southwest Asia, became a staple in Swedish baking. In *Saffranskrans*, a buttery saffron dough is filled with candied orange peel and raisins. The bread is popular during Advent and is often served on December 13 for St Lucia Day, a winter solstice celebration also called the “Festival of Lights.”

Makes 1 (12-inch) wreath

This bread will brighten your holiday table. While baking, our orange-and-cardamom marmalade filling oozes out of the dough to caramelize on the crust. Swedish pearl sugar and almond slices deliver the perfect crunch. We suggest sprinkling on more of both before serving for added texture

- 1 teaspoon saffron threads
- ¼ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- 1 tablespoon (15 grams) vodka
- 1½ cups (300 grams) warm whole milk (115°F/46°C to 120°F/49°C)
- 2 large eggs (100 grams), divided
- 4 cups (508 grams) bread flour
- ½ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 tablespoon (6 grams) instant yeast
- ½ cup (76 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and softened

Orange Marmalade Filling (recipe follows)

- ½ cup (64 grams) golden raisins
- ½ cup (85 grams) diced Candied Orange Peel (recipe follows)
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) water
- 1 tablespoon (7 grams) sliced almonds
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) Swedish pearl sugar

1. In a mortar, grind saffron threads and salt with a pestle. Add vodka, and let stand for 30 minutes.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together warm milk, 1 egg (50 grams), and saffron mixture.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment, stir together flour, granulated sugar, and yeast. With mixer on low speed, gradually add milk mixture. Increase mixer speed to medium-low, and beat until well combined. Add butter, a few pieces at a time, beating until combined. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until smooth and elastic, about 7 minutes. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover directly with plastic wrap, and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, about 1 hour.

4. Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.

5. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into an 18x12-inch rectangle. Spread Orange Marmalade Filling onto dough, leaving a ½-inch border on all sides. Sprinkle with golden raisins and diced Candied Orange Peel. Starting at one long side, roll up dough, jelly roll style; press edge to seal. Place on prepared pan. Form into a circle, pinching ends to seal.

6. Using kitchen scissors, make a 45-degree cut into dough, leaving about ¼ inch of dough uncut. (Be careful not to cut all the way through dough.) Make a second cut ½ inch from first cut. Repeat process around the circle until you reach first cut.

7. Using your hands, gently pull and lay alternating pieces in opposite directions, either pulling toward the center of the circle or pulling toward the outside of the circle. (Make sure not to tear pieces completely off.) Cover loosely with plastic wrap, and let stand in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) for 30 minutes.

8. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C)

9. In a small bowl, whisk together 1 teaspoon (5 grams) water and remaining 1 egg (50 grams). Brush wreath with egg wash. Sprinkle with almonds and pearl sugar.

10. Bake until golden brown and internal temperature registers 190°F (88°C), about 40 minutes, covering with foil to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Let cool completely on a wire rack. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 4 days.

ORANGE MARMALADE FILLING

Makes about ¼ cup

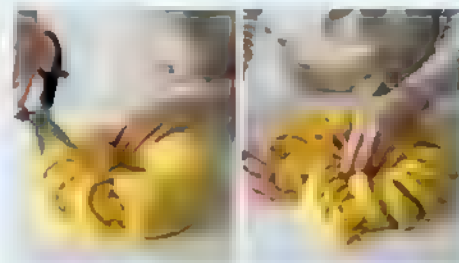
- ½ cup (107 grams) sweet orange marmalade
- 3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter, melted
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cardamom

1. In a small bowl, whisk together marmalade, melted butter, and cardamom. Use immediately, or refrigerate for up to 5 days.

Shape Your Wreath



1. Starting at one long side, roll up dough, jelly roll style



2. Make 45-degree cuts into dough, leaving about ¼ inch of dough uncut. Gently arrange alternating pieces toward or away from the wreath's center.

CANDIED ORANGE PEEL

Makes about 1 cup

- 1 large orange (131 grams)
- 1½ cups (360 grams) water
- 2 cups (400 grams) granulated sugar, divided

1. Peel orange, and slice peel into ¼-inch-thick strips.
2. In a small saucepan, bring peel and water to cover by 1 inch to a boil over medium heat. Cook for 15 minutes. Drain, and rinse with cold water.
3. In same pan, bring 1½ cups (360 grams) water and 1½ cups (300 grams) sugar to a boil over medium heat. Add peel. Reduce heat to medium-low, and simmer until peel is softened, 25 to 30 minutes. Drain.
4. Line a rimmed baking sheet with parchment paper.
5. Toss peel with remaining ½ cup (100 grams) sugar, and place on prepared pan. Let stand until dry, 1 to 2 days. Freeze in an airtight container for up to 2 months.



Swiss Hefekranz

Hefekranz, which translates to “yeast wreath,” refers to the traditional braided wreath bread enjoyed in Switzerland, southern Germany, and Austria during the winter holidays and Easter. *Hefekranz* and its cousin *hefezopf* (a braided loaf) typically include three woven strands of dough, which are said to represent the Holy Trinity. The classic recipe is scented with lemon, studded with raisins, and sprinkled with sliced almonds. Some historians claim it was developed in 1256 by Switzerland’s first bakers’ union. Another popular theory is that the braided bread originated as a symbol of human sacrifice. When a husband died, his wife would end her own life in his honor. This evolved into the wife leaving her braid—then considered a symbol of honor—in her husband’s grave, which eventually turned into leaving a braided loaf.

Makes 1 (12-inch) wreath

For an update on this braided beauty, we turned the almond flavor up a few notches by rehydrating golden raisins and cherries in amaretto before mixing them in with the dough. We love the sour-sweetness the cherries bring and how the final dusting of confectioners’ sugar looks like new fallen snow.

- 1 cup (240 grams) plus 1 teaspoon (5 grams) water, divided**
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (96 grams) golden raisins**
 - $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (96 grams) dried cherries**
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 grams) plus 2 tablespoons (30 grams) amaretto liqueur, divided**
 - 1 tablespoon (15 grams) fresh lemon juice**
 - $6\frac{1}{2}$ cups (813 grams) all-purpose flour, divided**
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 grams) warm whole milk (115°F/46°C to 120°F/49°C)**
 - 3 large eggs (150 grams), divided**
 - $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar**
 - 1 tablespoon (6 grams) instant yeast**
 - 1 cup (240 grams) warm water (115°F/46°C to 120°F/49°C)**
 - 1 tablespoon (9 grams) lemon zest**
 - 2 teaspoons (6 grams) kosher salt**
 - $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, cubed and softened**
 - 2 tablespoons (14 grams) sliced almonds**
- Garnish: confectioners’ sugar**

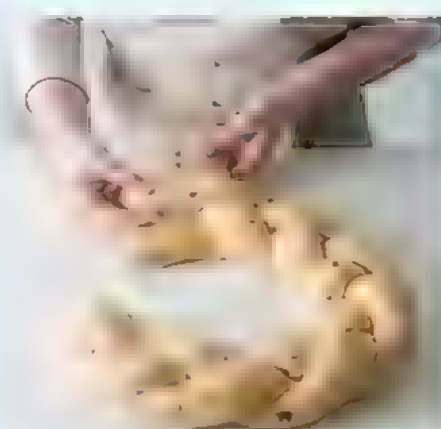
- 1.** In a small saucepan, bring 1 cup (240 grams) water, raisins, cherries, $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 grams) amaretto, and lemon juice to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat, and simmer until liquid is reduced by three-fourths and fruit is plump, about 20 minutes. Drain, and let cool completely.
- 2.** In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment, stir together 3 cups (375 grams) flour, warm milk, 2 eggs (100 grams), granulated sugar, yeast, 1 cup

- (240 grams) warm water, and remaining 2 tablespoons (30 grams) amaretto. Let rest until slightly bubbly, 15 to 20 minutes.
- 3.** With mixer on medium-low speed, add fruit mixture, zest, salt, and remaining $3\frac{1}{2}$ cups (438 grams) flour, beating until combined. Add butter, a few pieces at a time, beating until combined. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat until smooth and elastic, about 7 minutes. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover directly with plastic wrap, and let rise in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, about 1 hour.
- 4.** Line a large baking sheet with parchment paper.
- 5.** On a lightly floured surface, divide dough into 3 equal pieces. Roll each piece into a 24-inch-long rope, and place on prepared pan. Pinch ropes together at one end to seal, and braid. Form into a circle, pinching ends to seal. Cover loosely with plastic wrap, and let stand in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) for 30 minutes.
- 6.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
- 7.** In a small bowl, whisk together remaining 1 teaspoon (5 grams) water and remaining 1 egg (50 grams). Brush wreath with egg wash. Sprinkle with almonds.
- 8.** Bake until golden brown and internal temperature registers 190°F (88°C), about 40 minutes, covering with foil after 30 minutes of baking to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Let cool completely on a wire rack. Dust with confectioners’ sugar, if desired. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 4 days.

Shape Your Wreath



- 1.** Roll each piece of dough into a 24-inch-long rope. Pinch ropes together at one end to seal. To braid, cross left strand over middle strand. Cross right strand over strand that is now in the middle.



- 2.** Form into a circle, pinching ends to seal.

MAKE IT AHEAD

Don’t let your busy holiday schedule stop you from baking these breads.

- You can make your dough the day before shaping and baking it. Store in the refrigerator until ready to bake, but do not refrigerate dough for more than 24 hours.
- The breads taste best the day they are baked, but you can bake them 3 to 4 days ahead of time. Store at room temperature in an airtight container until ready to serve.
- Need more than just a few days? Make the bread, and freeze it for up to 2 weeks. After baking, make sure it is completely cool. Wrap well in plastic wrap before freezing. When ready to enjoy, loosely cover bread with foil, and bake at 350°F (180°C) for 15 minutes.



Nutcracker SUITE

CHESTNUTS, THE MOST CELEBRATED NUT OF THE HOLIDAY SEASON,
BRING DEPTH TO DECADENT BAKED GOODS, FROM SILKY MOUSSE
CAKE TO A CARAMEL-WRAPPED TOWER OF CHOUX PASTRIES.

ROASTED CHESTNUTS

Makes about 4 cups

There's a reason this treat made it into one of the most beloved Christmas carols: roasted chestnuts are classic—and delicious. Follow our foolproof method to get your chestnuts ready for the recipes that follow. Or just eat them on their own for a warm, nutty holiday snack.

6 cups (892 grams) whole chestnuts in shells

1. Preheat oven to 425°F (220°C).
2. Using a sharp paring knife, cut an "X" in rounded side of chestnuts. (This lets steam escape, and will prevent them from exploding.) Place on a rimmed baking sheet, cut side up.
3. Roast until shells curl away from nutmeats, 20 to 30 minutes.
4. Wrap hot chestnuts in a kitchen towel, and squeeze gently to further loosen shells. Let stand until cool enough to handle. Peel shells from nutmeats. Use immediately, or store in a resealable plastic bag at room temperature for up to 24 hours.

Note: *Fresh chestnuts will keep refrigerated for up to 6 months in a breathable container*









PLAN AHEAD

This masterpiece is doable for even pâtisserie novices. We suggest making the pastries and pastry cream a day before you plan to serve, and assembling the croquembouche on the morning of. It can be assembled up to 8 hours before serving. Keep refrigerated.



CHESTNUT, CRANBERRY, AND ROSEMARY-LAMINATED PAIN D'ÉPI

Makes 2 loaves

This laminated loaf will have you ditching the dinner rolls for good. Fresh rosemary and fragrant chestnuts lend warm savory notes to the buttery bread studded with sweet cranberries. The traditional Pain d'Épi shape resembles a stalk of wheat, perfect for tearing and sharing.

- 3½ cups (466 grams) plus 1¼ cups (159 grams) bread flour, divided
- 1¼ cups (420 grams) plus 2 teaspoons (10 grams) warm water (105°F/41°C to 110°F/43°C), divided
- 2¼ teaspoons (4 grams) instant yeast, divided
- 6 teaspoons (18 grams) kosher salt, divided
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) granulated sugar
- 1¼ cups (195 grams) Roasted Chestnuts (recipe precedes), chopped
- ¾ cup (96 grams) dried cranberries
- ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 tablespoons (4 grams) chopped fresh rosemary
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- 2 cups (480 grams) ice water
- ¼ cup (56 grams) olive oil

1. In a medium bowl, combine 1¼ cups (159 grams) flour, ½ cup (120 grams) warm water, and ¾ teaspoon yeast. Cover with plastic wrap, and let stand at room temperature for 16 hours.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the dough hook attachment, beat yeast mixture, 1¼ cups (300 grams) warm water, 4 teaspoons (12 grams) salt, sugar, remaining 3½ cups (466 grams) flour, and remaining 2 teaspoons (4 grams) yeast at medium-low speed for 6 minutes. Increase mixer speed to medium, and beat for 2 minutes. Add Roasted Chestnuts and cranberries, beating just until combined, about 1 minute. Shape dough into a ball.
3. Spray a large bowl with cooking spray. Place dough in bowl, turning to grease top. Cover with plastic wrap, and let stand in a warm, draft-free place (75°F/24°C) until doubled in size, about 1 hour.
4. Between 2 sheets of plastic wrap, shape butter into a 10x8-inch rectangle. Sprinkle with rosemary, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for at least 20 minutes or up to

24 hours. Let stand at room temperature for 10 minutes before using

5. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C). Position oven rack to lowest level, and place a large cast-iron skillet on rack. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper
 6. Freeze dough for 10 minutes. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 16x10-inch rectangle. Unwrap butter block, and place in center of rectangle. Fold dough edges over to enclose butter block. Roll dough into a 24x8-inch rectangle. Fold one short side over 3 inches. Fold other short side over 9 inches, making ends meet. Fold dough in half, creating an 8x6-inch rectangle. Roll into an 18x8-inch rectangle. Fold dough into thirds, like a letter, creating an 8x6-inch rectangle. Cover with plastic wrap, and let rest for 10 minutes.
 7. Roll dough into a 19x11-inch rectangle. Trim ½ inch off all sides of dough. Cut dough in half lengthwise, creating 2 (18x5-inch) rectangles. Starting at one long side, roll up 1 rectangle, pinching seam to seal. Transfer to prepared pan. Repeat with remaining dough.
 8. Using kitchen scissors, make a 45-degree cut into dough 1 inch from end, leaving about ¼ inch of dough uncut. (Be careful not to cut all the way through the dough.) Lay dough piece over to one side. Make another 1-inch cut, and lay to the other side. Repeat process until you reach end of dough. Repeat with remaining loaf.
 9. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and remaining 2 teaspoons (10 grams) water. Brush dough with egg wash. Pour 2 cups (480 grams) ice water in cast-iron skillet, and place loaves in hot oven.
 10. Bake until deep golden brown, 25 to 30 minutes. Brush with oil, and sprinkle with remaining 2 teaspoons (6 grams) salt. Let cool slightly on a wire rack. Serve warm. Store in airtight container at room temperature for up to 4 days.
- ### CHESTNUT MONT BLANC
- Makes 12
- Chestnut has always been the star of this classic Italian dessert. Spiraling coils of sweetened chestnut purée encircle homemade Whipped Cream with a Swiss Meringue at the center. Named for its resemblance to a snow-capped mountain, the Mont Blanc delivers layer after layer of contrasting flavors and textures in every bite. We suggest pairing it with mulled wine*
- Swiss Meringues (recipe follows)
Almond Tart (recipe follows)
Whipped Cream (recipe follows)

Chestnut Paste (recipe follows)
Garnish: gold leaf

1. Place 1 Swiss Meringue in center of an Almond Tart. Place Whipped Cream in a pastry bag fitted with a 2A Wilton tip. Pipe a circle around edge of Swiss Meringue. Continue piping inward in a circular motion, finishing with a 2½-inch cone on top of Swiss Meringue. Use a small offset spatula to smooth out ridges.
2. Place 3½ cups Chestnut Paste in a piping bag fitted with a #10 piping tip. Pipe Chestnut Paste in a circular motion around Whipped Cream to create a swirled cone shape. Repeat with remaining Swiss Meringues, Almond Tarts, Whipped Cream, and Chestnut Paste. Garnish with gold leaf, if desired

SWISS MERINGUES

Makes about 2 cups

- 2 large egg whites (60 grams)
 - ¼ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
 - ¼ teaspoon cream of tartar
1. Preheat oven to 200°F (93°C). Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.
 2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, whisk together egg whites, sugar, and cream of tartar. Set bowl over a saucepan of simmering water, and cook, whisking constantly, until sugar is dissolved and a candy thermometer registers 140°F (60°C), 5 to 7 minutes. Return bowl to stand mixer, and beat at high speed until stiff peaks form, about 10 minutes. Let cool to room temperature. Transfer to a pastry bag fitted with a Wilton 1M Open Star tip. Pipe 1½- to 2-inch rosettes on prepared pan.
 3. Bake for 1½ hours. Turn oven off, and leave meringues in oven with door closed for 30 minutes. Store in an airtight container for up to 2 weeks

ALMOND TARTS

Makes 12

- ¾ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- ½ cup (67 grams) granulated sugar
- ¾ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams)
- 1¼ cups (219 grams) all-purpose flour
- ½ cup (48 grams) almond meal
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) heavy whipping cream

Almond Filling (recipe follows)

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, sugar, and salt

at medium speed until creamy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Stir in egg yolk. Reduce mixer speed to low. Add flour, almond meal, and cream, beating until combined. Shape dough into a disk, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 1 hour.

2. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Butter and flour 12 (3-inch) tart pans

3. Divide dough into 12 balls. Transfer to prepared tart pans, pressing into bottom and up sides. Refrigerate for 20 minutes. Divide Almond Filling among prepared tart shells.

4. Bake until golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Let cool completely on wire racks. Store in airtight containers for up to 2 days.

ALMOND FILLING

Makes 2 cups

- 1 cup (200 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 cup (142 grams) whole almonds
- 1 cup (227 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 large eggs (100 grams)
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) almond extract
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

1. In the work bowl of a food processor, place sugar and almonds; pulse until finely ground, 2 to 3 minutes. Add butter, and pulse until combined. Add eggs, almond extract, and salt; pulse until smooth, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Transfer to a small bowl. Cover and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or up to 8 hours.

WHIPPED CREAM

Makes about 6 cups

- 3 cups (720 grams) heavy whipping cream
- ¼ cup (90 grams) confectioners' sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat cream at medium speed until soft peaks form, 1 to 2 minutes. Gradually add confectioners' sugar, beating until stiff peaks form. Cover and refrigerate for up to 2 days.

CHESTNUT PASTE

Makes about 4 cups

- 4 cups (624 grams) Roasted Chestnuts (recipe on page 77)
- 1 vanilla bean, split lengthwise, seeds scraped and reserved
- 4 cups (960 grams) water
- 1½ cups (394 grams) Simple Syrup (recipe follows)

1. In a medium saucepan, bring Roasted Chestnuts, vanilla bean, and 4 cups (960 grams) water to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat to low; cover and simmer until Roasted Chestnuts are softened, about 30 minutes. Remove vanilla bean, and drain chestnuts

2. Transfer Roasted Chestnuts to the work bowl of a food processor; pulse until a smooth, thick paste forms, about 5 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. With processor running, add Simple Syrup in a slow, steady stream until a piping consistency is reached. Refrigerate in an airtight container for up to 1 week.

SIMPLE SYRUP

Makes about 1½ cups

- 1½ cups (300 grams) water
- 1½ cups (250 grams) granulated sugar

1. In a small saucepan, bring 1½ cups (300 grams) water and sugar to a boil over medium-high heat, stirring occasionally, until sugar is dissolved. Remove from heat, and let cool completely.



CHOCOLATE-CHESTNUT MOUSSE CAKE

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

This s'mores-inspired cake features a thick, velvety layer of chocolate mousse enriched with roasted chestnuts. A splash of rum in the mousse mellows zippy ginger in the cake's base

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (100 grams) granulated sugar
2 large eggs (100 grams)
 $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (170 grams) unsulphured molasses
2 teaspoons (6 grams) lemon zest
2 teaspoons (4 grams) grated fresh ginger
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground ginger
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon (3.75 grams) baking soda
 $\frac{3}{4}$ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cloves
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 grams) whole milk
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (57 grams) diced crystallized ginger
Chocolate-Chestnut Mousse (recipe follows)
Salty Brown Sugar Swiss Meringue (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Butter and flour an 8-inch springform pan. Line bottom of pan with parchment paper, and spray pan again.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until creamy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating well after each addition. Add molasses, zest, and grated ginger, beating until combined.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, ground ginger, baking soda, salt, and cloves. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with milk, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition. Fold in crystallized ginger. Pour batter into prepared pan, smoothing top with an offset spatula.
4. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, about 35 minutes. Let cool in pan for 15 minutes. Remove sides of pan, and invert cake onto a wire rack. Remove parchment, and invert cake back onto bottom of pan to let cool completely.
5. Cut parchment into a 25x5-inch strip. Wrap parchment strip around cake, and secure with tape. Place springform sides around cake and parchment, and secure. Top with Chocolate-Chestnut Mousse, smoothing with an offset spatula. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours or up to 24 hours.
6. Remove sides of springform pan and parchment. Top with Salty Brown Sugar

Swiss Meringue. Using a kitchen torch, toast meringue. Freeze for 20 to 30 minutes before serving

CHOCOLATE-CHESTNUT MOUSSE

Makes about 8 cups

2 cups (312 grams) Roasted Chestnuts (recipe on page 77)
2 cups (480 grams) whole milk
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (110 grams) firmly packed brown sugar
1 tablespoon (13 grams) vanilla extract
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
4 ounces (115 grams) bittersweet chocolate, chopped
1 tablespoon (15 grams) dark rum
2 cups (480 grams) heavy whipping cream

1. In a small saucepan, bring Roasted Chestnuts, milk, brown sugar, vanilla, salt, and cinnamon to a boil over medium heat. Reduce heat, and simmer, stirring occasionally, until milk is reduced by one-fourth and Roasted Chestnuts are tender, 15 to 20 minutes. Transfer mixture to the container of a blender, and purée on high until smooth, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of container. Add chocolate and rum; blend on high until chocolate is melted, about 2 minutes. Transfer to a large bowl, and let cool completely, stirring occasionally.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat cream at medium-high speed until stiff peaks form, about 5 minutes. Fold one-third of whipped cream into cooled chestnut mixture. Fold in remaining whipped cream until just combined. Cover and refrigerate for up to 24 hours.

SALTY BROWN SUGAR SWISS MERINGUE

Makes about 3 cups

3 large egg whites (90 grams)
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (147 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, whisk together egg whites, brown sugar, and salt. Set bowl over a saucepan of simmering water, and cook, whisking constantly, until sugar is dissolved and a candy thermometer registers 140°F (60°C), 5 to 7 minutes. Return bowl to stand mixer, and beat at high speed until stiff peaks form, about 10 minutes. Continue beating until cooled to room temperature. Use immediately.

CHESTNUT, FIG, AND GINGER CROQUEMBOUCHE

Makes 1 tower

In this dramatic tower of deliciousness, bite-size profiteroles are stacked and bound with sweeping threads of caramel. In French, "croquembouche" means "crunch in the mouth," and you'll love the occasional crunch of the hardened caramel.

$\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter
 $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (360 grams) plus 2 teaspoons (10 grams) water, divided
 $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 grams) whole milk
4 cups (800 grams) plus 1 teaspoon (4 grams) granulated sugar, divided
 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
 $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups (156 grams) all-purpose flour
5 large eggs (250 grams), divided
Chestnut Pastry Cream (recipe follows)
Fig Pastry Cream (recipe follows)
Ginger Pastry Cream (recipe follows)

1. Preheat oven to 375°F (190°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In a medium saucepan, melt butter over medium heat. Add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 grams) water, milk, 1 teaspoon (4 grams) sugar, and salt; bring to a boil. Remove from heat, and stir in flour. Place back over medium heat, and cook, stirring constantly, until a skin forms on bottom of pan.
3. Transfer mixture to the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment; let cool for 3 minutes. With mixer on medium speed, add 4 eggs (200 grams), one at a time, beating until combined. Transfer mixture to an 18-inch piping bag fitted with a $\frac{3}{8}$ -inch tip. (Dough can be made up to 1 day ahead of baking. Refrigerate in a pastry bag until ready to bake.) Using even pressure, pipe 1-inch rounds onto prepared pans. Smooth pointed peaks with a moistened finger.
4. In a small bowl, whisk together 2 teaspoons (10 grams) water and remaining 1 egg (50 grams). Using a pastry brush, lightly brush puffs with egg wash.
5. Bake until puffed and golden brown, 20 to 25 minutes. Turn oven off, and carefully remove from oven. Using a knife or wooden skewer, poke holes in bottoms of cream puffs to release excess moisture. Place cream puffs on pan, right side up, and return to oven. Leave in oven with door cracked for 1 hour, covering with foil to prevent excess browning, if necessary.
6. Using a $\frac{3}{16}$ -inch tip, poke holes in bottom of cream puffs. Fit a pastry bag with a $\frac{3}{16}$ -inch tip, and fill one-third of puffs with

Chestnut Pastry Cream, one-third with Fig Pastry Cream, and one-third with Ginger Pastry Cream.

7. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper, and trace a 4½-inch circle. Prepare a large ice bath.

8. In a large saucepan, bring remaining 1 cup (240 grams) water and remaining 4 cups (800 grams) sugar to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook until mixture registers 320°F (160°C) on a candy thermometer. Transfer pan to prepared ice bath. Carefully dip top of cream puffs into caramel, and place on an unlined baking sheet to harden.

9. Dip side of 1 puff into caramel, and place hot caramel side down onto prepared pan just outside parchment circle (top of puff should be facing out). Dip 2 sides (9 o'clock and 6 o'clock) of another puff in caramel, and position on parchment so 1 side adheres to side of first puff and other side is on parchment. Using parchment circle as your guide, repeat with 7 more puffs to complete bottom layer. Choose 8 puffs to make up second layer. Adhere puffs to croquembouche in same way as first layer, anchoring puffs in spaces between puffs on first layer. Continue building croquembouche with slightly smaller circles for each layer. The number of puffs per layer may not be consecutive numerically, due to difference of puff sizes and steepness of croquembouche. There should be about 8 layers total, with final layer being a single puff. (If caramel becomes too stiff while constructing, reheat over medium-low heat to loosen, but be careful not to overcook. You may have to reheat several times.)

10. Once assembled, let caramel cool in pan just until it begins to form a thread when a fork is lifted from it. Dip fork in caramel, and circle around croquembouche to enclose cream puffs with thin caramel strings. For additional garnish, line a baking sheet with a silicone mat, and create decorative string designs with excess caramel. Once hardened, remove decorative strings, and place around base of croquembouche. Serve immediately, or refrigerate for up to 8 hours.

Note: *Pâte à choux* can be piped and frozen for up to 1 month. Leave uncovered until no longer tacky, about 1 hour, then cover. If baking from frozen, add 5 minutes to baking time

CHESTNUT PASTRY CREAM

Makes about 1½ cups

- 3 tablespoons (36 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons (16 grams) cornstarch
- 1 large egg (50 grams)

- 1 cup (240 grams) whole milk
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, cubed
- ½ cup (130 grams) Chestnut Paste (recipe on page 78)

1. In a small bowl, whisk together sugar, cornstarch, and egg.
2. In a medium saucepan, bring milk to a boil over medium heat. Gradually pour hot milk into egg mixture, whisking constantly. Return mixture to saucepan, and cook, whisking constantly, until thickened.
3. Transfer cream to a small bowl, and let stand at room temperature for 10 minutes. Whisk to loosen, and add butter; stir until well combined. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface of cream. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Remove from refrigerator, and stir in Chestnut Paste. Pastry cream will keep refrigerated for up to 3 days.

FIG PASTRY CREAM

Makes about 1½ cups

- 3 tablespoons (36 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons (16 grams) cornstarch
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- 1 cup (240 grams) whole milk
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, cubed
- ½ cup (80 grams) fig preserves

1. In a small bowl, whisk together sugar, cornstarch, and egg.
2. In a medium saucepan, bring milk to a boil over medium heat. Gradually pour hot milk into egg mixture, whisking constantly. Return mixture to saucepan, and cook, whisking constantly, until thickened.
3. Transfer cream to a small bowl, and let stand at room temperature for 10 minutes. Whisk to

loosen, and add butter; stir until well combined. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface of cream. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Remove from refrigerator, and stir in fig preserves.

GINGER PASTRY CREAM

Makes about 1½ cups

- 1½ cups (300 grams) whole milk
- 2 tablespoons (12 grams) grated fresh ginger
- 3 tablespoons (36 grams) granulated sugar
- 2 tablespoons (16 grams) cornstarch
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter, cubed

1. In a medium saucepan, bring milk and ginger to a boil over medium heat. Remove from heat; cover and let steep for 20 minutes.
2. In a small bowl, whisk together sugar, cornstarch, and egg.
3. Strain milk mixture, and return to saucepan; bring to a boil over medium heat. Gradually pour hot milk mixture into egg mixture, whisking constantly. Return to saucepan, and cook, whisking constantly, until thickened.
4. Transfer cream to a small bowl, and let stand at room temperature for 10 minutes. Whisk to loosen; add butter, and stir until well combined. Cover with plastic wrap, pressing wrap directly onto surface of cream. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours. ☐





A BAVARIAN

FIND A WEALTH OF
GINGERBREAD (AND FEEL-
GOOD VIBES) AT NUREMBERG'S
FABLED CHRISTMAS MARKET

BY ALIA AKKAM

PHOTOS COURTESY STADT NÜRNBERG

Charming wooden stalls crafted from spruce, some of them more than 150 years old, greet the surge of annual revelers who descend upon Christkindlesmarkt in the Bavarian town of Nuremberg. Festooned with lights and garlands and capped in mirthful red and white-striped roofs, these 186 stands promise shoppers shiny ceramics, wooden toys, and cookie cutters in whimsical shapes. When folks grow peckish, bronzed pretzels and made-to-order waffles come to the rescue, as do German specialties like nutty fruit loaf and gingerbread.



Holiday DREAM

Majestic central European cities, including Vienna, Salzburg, Prague, and Budapest, are synonymous with sprawling Christmas markets, luring locals and visitors to knock elbows with strangers as they pore over handmade journals and copper bracelets to potentially tuck into stockings dangling above fireplaces. Even the impressively organized who diligently clear their weighty shopping lists still attend, thrilled to soak up the cheerful atmosphere with gloved hands wrapped around glass mugs of *Glühwein*, comforting hot red wine spiced with cinnamon, orange, and clove. Germany

in particular is known for its multitude of Christmas markets, ranging, say, from a splashy, cosmopolitan affair in Stuttgart to a quaint celebration on the shore of Lake Constance, but the grande dame of them all is Nuremberg's Christkindlesmarkt. A commercial center with a picturesque medieval old town that is home to an eponymously named castle, Nuremberg is some 100 miles north of Munich. Although the market's precise origins are murky, its roots are deep, traced back to at least 1628.



One of the market's biggest draws is the preponderance of *lebkuchen*. These spherical disks of cakey, sweet-spicy gingerbread biscuits have long been a Nuremberg tradition, first baked by monks during the Middle Ages, when they were known as "honey cakes." Today, mesmerizing stacks of the dessert, sometimes coated in chocolate, iced in sugar, or simply adorned with almonds, are on display at Christkindlesmarkt. Once handed over in a white bag, the gingerbread will likely be demolished by the market's closing time, but opting for a stash of them packed neatly into a pretty tin certainly makes for a memorable present. Among the beloved bakeries whipping it up for the occasion are Confiserie Neef and Lebkuchen Schmidt. The latter also makes another seasonal Nuremberg favorite: *früchtebrot*, a rum-soaked fruit loaf studded with ingredients like plum, apricot, raisin, orange, and hazelnut

Lebkuchen is intertwined with Christkindlesmarkt's alluring personality as much as the signature sizzling bratwurst, a trio of juicy, petite sausages fresh off the grill, nestled into a crispy roll, and generously anointed with mustard. It's also as cherished as the painstakingly made, quirky figurines

known as prune men—brilliantly fashioned from wire, dried prunes, figs, and walnuts—or the Christkind. Every year, on the Friday before the first Sunday of Advent, a young woman donning a gleaming crown and an ensemble befitting of Golden Dream Barbie takes to Nuremberg's Hauptmarkt, where Christkindlesmarkt is set up, and, with enthralled masses surrounding her, officially opens the market to the public by reciting a poignant prologue. Elected every two years by locals, she is the Christkind, ambassador of Christkindlesmarkt, who symbolizes the gift-dispensing Angel of Christmas.

Berlin native Carsten Baumann, general manager at the new Park Plaza Nuremberg hotel, a 12-minute walk to the festivities, has been to myriad German Christmas markets. With such one-of-a-kind elements in place at Nuremberg, he believes that here you can "fully breathe in the Christmas spirit. Usually it is cold, you have already shopped and organized a few gifts for your loved ones. Then you enjoy a wander through the market and meet friends or fall into a conversation with strangers, which is a big part of the magic. This happens a lot as people are relaxed and enjoying themselves."



"THE MARKET ITSELF IS A SENSORY INDULGENCE."

Andrea Schulte-Peevers, the Berlin-based author of *Lonely Planet Germany*, has been making the German Christmas market rounds since she was a child, and she agrees that "there's just something special about the one in Nuremberg. Maybe it's the air of timelessness—it is one of the oldest in the country after all. But more likely it's the romantic setting in the cobblestoned market square, surrounded by the town hall and churches built before Columbus set sail." She likes visiting after dark best, "when their illuminated façades cast a magical glow," she says, adding, "The market itself is a sensory indulgence the intoxicating aroma of cinnamon-roasted almonds, the sounds of carolers and excited children, sparkling ornaments in warmly lit stalls. It inspires a sense of awe and somehow connects with the inner child in all of us."

An escape from a world increasingly besieged by glum news, Christkindlesmarkt is where comfort and joy dominate purely by taking a spin on the merry-go-round and smiling at *rauschgoldenenengels*, delicate gold-foil angels to crown the tree. Gliding through the market in a stagecoach, accompanied by the sounds of holiday tunes wafting from a horn—hopefully aided by a sprinkling of seductive snowfall—is no gimmick, but the conduit to a place where seemingly no bad can sprout amid such an abundance of love and food

GO THERE

Christkindlesmarkt
Hauptmarkt, Nuremberg
December 1–23, 10 a.m. –9 p.m.
Christmas Eve, 10 a.m. –2 p.m.
christkindlesmarkt.de/en





Christmas Across GERMANY



Beyond Nuremberg, there are a slew of other German Christmas markets that stand out from the pack. These five offer a delightful bonus in the form of distinct desserts

REITERLESMARKT | ROTHENBURG OB DE TAUBER

With its impressively intact medieval old town, Rothenburg ob de Tauber in Bavaria is always stunning, especially during Reiterlesmarkt, when the crowds are devouring *schneebälle*, shortcrust pastry rolled into petite "snowballs."

rothenburg.de/tourismus; willkommen-in-rothenburg; December 1-23

STRIEZELMARKT | DRESDEN

Germany's purportedly oldest Christmas market is Striezelmarkt, found in the rebuilt cultural hub of Dresden and best known for a barrage of stollen. Try this cake-like dried fruit bread on the Saturday before the second Sunday of Advent when an enormous loaf of it is unveiled, *fêted* in a parade, and sold piece by piece at the market for charity

dresden.de; November 29–December 24

ERFURT CHRISTMAS MARKET | ERFURT

Erfurt, smack in the center of Germany, has a glittering market that complements the city's medieval storybook backdrop of original half-timbered homes. Marvel at the Nativity scene of hand-carved, life-size wooden figures, then spring for *Erfurter Schüttchen*, a log-shaped stollen with raisins, almonds, lemon, and a jolt of rum or brandy

erfurt-tourismus.de; November 28–December 22

WEIHNACHTSMARKT AM KÖLNER DOM | COLOGNE

Cologne has a number of Christmas markets, but perhaps the loveliest is the one set against the landmark Gothic cathedral. Featuring the largest Christmas tree in the Rhineland, it's a spot that encourages lingering with flaky *apfelsstrudel*, golden apple strudel

koelnerweihnachtsmarkt.com; November 27–December 23

FREIBURG CHRISTMAS MARKET | FREIBURG

On the cusp of the Black Forest awaits the Freiburg Christmas Market where shopping for local jewelry, candles, and handblown glass is punctuated by stops for *nomenseufzer*, doughnuts stuffed with applesauce

weihnachtsmarkt.freiburg.de; November 27–December 23 

Christmas Cookie WONDERLAND

IT'S THE SEASON TO SHAKE UP YOUR
HOLIDAY COOKIE GAME! FROM COCKTAIL-
READY LINZERS TO KITSCHY MINI YULE
LOGS, WE'RE REVAMPING HOLIDAY
CLASSICS FOR A COOKIE TRAY THAT'LL
SURPRISE AND DELIGHT EVERYONE FROM
SANTA TO SCROOGE.

Pecan-Ginger Linzer Cookies
with Orange Marmalade
page 94

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MARCY BLACK SIMPSON / STYLING BY SIDNEY BRAGIEL





ROSEMARY SHORTBREAD LINZER COOKIES WITH RED PEPPER JELLY

Makes about 12

Red pepper jelly brings a festive, spicy flair to these buttery rosemary-infused sandwich cookies. Skip the cheese and crackers at your next cocktail party and serve these sweet and savory Linzers with your favorite sparkling wine.

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) confectioners' sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (2 grams) vanilla extract
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons (4 grams) chopped fresh rosemary
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground black pepper
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (80 grams) red pepper jelly

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, confectioners' sugar, and vanilla at medium speed until creamy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, rosemary, salt, and pepper. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until combined. Divide dough

in half, and shape into disks. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour or overnight.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. On a lightly floured surface, roll half of dough to $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness. Using a 3-inch fluted round cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps only once. Repeat with remaining dough. Using a 1-inch fluted round cutter, cut centers from half of cookies. Place about 1 inch apart on prepared pans.

5. Bake until edges are lightly browned, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on pans for 1 minute. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Spread about 1 teaspoon (7 grams) pepper jelly onto flat side of all solid cookies. Place cookies with cutouts, flat side down, on top of jelly. Bake 2 to 3 minutes more. Let cool completely. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 4 days.



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Peppermint Cookies
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Cardamom Honey
Cut-Out Cookies
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CRANBERRY ORANGE YULE LOG COOKIES

Makes 24

We gave the classic holiday roulade also known as a Bûche de Noël a mini makeover. These bite-size Yule logs have a tart and citrusy dough complemented with a sweet "bark" coating of white or semisweet chocolate. Miniature Gumdrops Mushrooms and Leaves add a precious level of detail to your small-scale masterpiece.

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) confectioners' sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground nutmeg
- 1 large egg (50 grams), separated
- $1\frac{1}{4}$ cups (156 grams) all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (43 grams) chopped dried cranberries
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) orange zest
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) water
- 2 ounces (55 grams) white chocolate, chopped
- 2 ounces (55 grams) semisweet chocolate, chopped

Gumdrops Mushrooms and Leaves (recipe follows)

Garnish: confectioners' sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, confectioners' sugar, salt, and nutmeg at medium speed until creamy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg yolk, beating until combined.

2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cranberries, and zest. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until combined. Divide dough into 4 equal portions. Shape into disks, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 1 hour.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. On a lightly floured surface, roll each disk into an 18-inch-long rope. Cut each rope into 6 (3-inch-long) logs. Cut $\frac{1}{4}$ inch off ends of each log on a bias, reserving dough scraps. Place logs on prepared pans.

5. In a small bowl, whisk together egg white and 1 teaspoon (5 grams) water. Brush logs and reserved dough scraps with egg wash, and adhere 2 reserved dough scraps to each log to create stumps.

6. Bake until lightly golden, 8 to 10 minutes. Remove from oven, and let cool completely.

7. In a microwave-safe bowl, heat white chocolate on high in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until melted and

smooth. Repeat with semisweet chocolate. Dip each log in melted chocolate, coating top and sides of cookie. Using a fork, create bark lines on chocolate-coated cookies. Adhere Gumdrops Mushrooms and Leaves to cookies as desired. Let chocolate set. Garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired.

GUMDROP MUSHROOMS AND LEAVES

Makes 60 mushrooms and 40 leaves

- 5 red gumdrops
- 4 white gumdrops
- 1 ounce (30 grams) white chocolate, melted
- 3 green gumdrops

1. Line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

2. Roll out red gumdrops to flatten. Using the tip of a Wilton #10 round piping tip, cut out 60 circles (about 12 per gumdrop).

3. Roll out white gumdrops to flatten. Cut into very thin strips. Using melted white chocolate, adhere each strip to flat side of a red disk. Place mushrooms, strip side up, on prepared pan. Let chocolate set for 1 hour.

4. Roll out green gumdrops to flatten. Using a Wilton #104 leaf piping tip, cut out 40 teardrop leaves. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 2 weeks.



EGGNOG DROP COOKIES

Makes about 30

Your favorite holiday toddy gets the cookie send-up it deserves. Nutmeg, cloves, cinnamon, and spiced rum come together in these simple, tender drop cookies for a perfectly balanced eggnog flavor.

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (170 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (165 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 large egg yolks (37 grams)
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (2 grams) rum extract
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (2 grams) maple syrup extract
- $2\frac{1}{4}$ cups (281 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) baking powder
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cinnamon
- $\frac{1}{8}$ teaspoon ground cloves
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) spiced rum
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) heavy whipping cream
- Vanilla Buttercream (recipe follows)
- Garnish: grated fresh nutmeg

1. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 3 baking sheets with parchment paper.
2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugars at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg yolks, one at a time, beating just until combined after each addition. Beat in extracts.
3. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, baking powder, nutmeg, salt, cinnamon, and cloves. In a small bowl, combine rum and cream. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture alternately with rum mixture, beginning and ending with flour mixture, beating just until combined after each addition. Using a medium ($\frac{1}{4}$ -tablespoon) scoop, drop dough 2 inches apart onto prepared pans. Press down to flatten slightly.
4. Bake until lightly golden, 10 to 12 minutes. Let cool on pans for 5 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Spread Vanilla Buttercream onto cooled cookies, and garnish with nutmeg, if desired. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 4 days.

VANILLA BUTTERCREAM

Makes about 3 cups

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 3 cups (360 grams) confectioners' sugar
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) heavy whipping cream
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, confectioners' sugar, cream, and vanilla at medium-low speed until light and fluffy, 2 to 3 minutes. Use immediately.

CHOCOLATE PEPPERMINT COOKIES

Makes 24

For our sleek twist to the "stained glass" cookies from childhood, starlight peppermint candies are melted and then swirled within a dark cocoa cookie frame. A little kick of black pepper gives these chocolate cookies a hint of heat, rounding out the cool mint center.

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (147 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 1 tablespoon (14 grams) olive oil
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (43 grams) dark unsweetened cocoa powder
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (32 grams) cornstarch
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon ground black pepper
- Garnish: turbinado sugar
- 24 peppermint candies

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter, brown sugar, oil, vanilla, and salt at medium-low speed just until combined, about 2 minutes. Add egg, beating well.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cocoa, cornstarch, and pepper. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until combined. Shape dough into a disk, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 2 baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough to $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness. Using a 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch fluted square cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as

necessary. Using a $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch round cutter, cut centers from cookies. Place on prepared pans. Sprinkle with turbinado sugar, if desired.

5. Bake for 2 minutes. Place a peppermint in center of each cookie. Bake 6 minutes more. Using a wooden skewer and working quickly, swirl melted candy to create desired patterns. Let cool completely. Store in an airtight container at room temperature for up to 1 week.

CARDAMOM HONEY CUT OUT COOKIES

Makes 36

This recipe is inspired by the holiday honey bread cookies of Croatia known as Licitars. Since the 16th century, these brilliant red cookies have been displayed as ornaments and edible gifts during the Christmas season. Our warmly spiced adaptation pairs mellow honey with bold cardamom and swaps the traditional gelatin glaze with an easier-to-manuever and tastier Vanilla-Almond Royal Icing.

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (67 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams)
- 2 tablespoons (42 grams) honey
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (3 grams) vanilla extract
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ cups (188 grams) all-purpose flour
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) ground cardamom
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1.25 grams) baking soda
- Vanilla-Almond Royal Icing (recipe follows)
- Garnish: nonpareils

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and sugar at medium speed until creamy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add egg yolk, honey, and vanilla, beating until well combined.
2. In a medium bowl, whisk together flour, cardamom, salt, and baking soda. With mixer on low speed, gradually add flour mixture to butter mixture, beating until combined. Divide dough in half, and shape into disks. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for 1 hour.
3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line 3 baking sheets with parchment paper.
4. Working with one disk at a time, roll dough to $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness on a lightly floured surface. Using desired 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ -inch holiday cutters, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary. Place on prepared pans. Freeze for 15 minutes.
5. Bake until lightly golden, 8 to 10 minutes. Let cool on pans for 3 minutes. Remove from pans, and let cool completely on wire racks. Decorate as desired with Vanilla-Almond Royal

icing. Garnish with nonpareils, if desired. Let dry completely. Store in airtight containers for up to 1 week.

Note: If decorating with the traditional Licitar colors, let red icing dry completely before adding white icing on top, or colors will bleed.

VANILLA-ALMOND ROYAL ICING

Makes about 4 cups

- 4½ cups (540 grams) confectioners' sugar, divided
- 2 large egg whites (60 grams)
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) almond extract
- 1½ teaspoons (6 grams) clear vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon (2.25 grams) kosher salt
- ¼ teaspoon (1 gram) cream of tartar
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) heavy whipping cream

Gel food coloring

1. In the top of a double boiler, stir together 4 cups (480 grams) confectioners' sugar, egg whites, extracts, salt, and cream of tartar. Cook over simmering water, stirring occasionally, until mixture registers 140°F (60°C) on a candy thermometer. Pour mixture into the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment.

2. With mixer on low speed, add remaining ½ cup (60 grams) confectioners' sugar, beating until well combined and cooled to room temperature. Add cream, 1 tablespoon (15 grams) at a time, beating until desired consistency is reached. To test consistency, dip a spoon in frosting and lift, moving it in a figure-8 pattern over bowl as icing drizzles down. The figure-8 shape should disappear in 8 seconds for a cookie glaze and in 10 seconds for a thicker icing used for detail work. Color as desired with food coloring. Use immediately, or refrigerate with a piece of plastic wrap pressed directly onto surface for up to 2 days. Bring to room temperature, and stir before using.

PECAN GINGER LINZER COOKIES WITH ORANGE MARMALADE

Makes 12

Old-fashioned Linzer cookies use the same nutty almond and citrus-scented dough as a Linzer Torte. For our version, pecans sub in for almonds and grated fresh ginger brings a welcome dose of heat to this orange marmalade-filled sandwich cookie.

- ¾ cup (75 grams) pecan halves
 - ½ cup (50 grams) granulated sugar
 - 1¼ cups (167 grams) all-purpose flour
 - ¾ cup (55 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
 - 1 teaspoon (3 grams) lemon zest
 - 1 teaspoon (2 grams) grated fresh ginger
 - ½ teaspoon (1.5 grams) kosher salt
 - ¾ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
 - ¾ cup (80 grams) orange marmalade
- Garnish: confectioners' sugar

1. In the work bowl of a food processor, place pecan halves and granulated sugar; process until mixture is crumbly, about 2 minutes.

Add flour, brown sugar, zest, ginger, and salt; process until finely ground.

2. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat pecan mixture and butter at medium-low speed until well combined. Shape dough into a disk, and wrap in plastic wrap. Refrigerate for 30 minutes.

3. Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C). Line

2 baking sheets with parchment paper.

4. Roll dough to ¼-inch thickness between 2 sheets of parchment paper. Remove top sheet of parchment. Using a 3-inch star cutter, cut dough, rerolling scraps as necessary. Using a 1¼-inch star cutter, cut centers from half of cookies. Place on prepared pans.

5. Bake until lightly golden, 7 to 10 minutes.

Let cool on pans for 15 minutes. Spread 1 teaspoon (7 grams) orange marmalade onto flat side of all solid cookies. Place cookies with cutouts, flat side down, on top of marmalade. Bake 2 minutes more. Sprinkle with confectioners' sugar, if desired. Store, covered, at room temperature for up to 1 week. ■





WE'RE BAKING OUR WAY THROUGH THE SWEET CLASSICS OF CANADA TO EXPLORE
EVERYTHING FROM NEWFOUNDLAND'S FIGGY DUFF TO QUEBEC'S
SUGAR PIE TO BRITISH COLUMBIA'S NANAIMO BARS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY MAYA VISNYE. / RECIPE DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD STYLING BY EMILY TURNER



PRO TIP

This Mincemeat Braid dough can be made in advance and frozen for up to 2 months. Remove from freezer the night before, and place in the refrigerator to thaw.





PECAN BUTTER TARTS

Makes 12

While much of Canada's cuisine has European roots and inspiration, butter tarts, which first appeared in Ontario in the early 1900s, are uniquely Canadian. Some insist that the only authentic filling must include raisins, but we'll let you be the judge of that. You can even substitute chopped pecans with coconut or chocolate for a tasty twist.

Flaky Pastry Dough (recipe follows)

- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (165 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 5 tablespoons (70 grams) unsalted butter, melted
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (85 grams) dark corn syrup
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (85 grams) Grade A amber maple syrup
- 2 large eggs (100 grams)
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (6 grams) vanilla extract
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) distilled white vinegar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (57 grams) chopped pecans

1. Preheat oven to 450°F (230°C). Butter and flour a 12-cup muffin pan.
2. On a lightly floured surface, roll half of Flaky Pastry Dough to $\frac{1}{8}$ -inch thickness. Using a 4½- to 5-inch round cutter, cut dough into 6 circles, rerolling scraps once. Gently press rounds into prepared muffin cups, letting edges fold up around each other and extend over sides of pan. Repeat with remaining dough. Freeze for 20 minutes

3. In a medium bowl, whisk together brown sugar, melted butter, corn syrup, maple syrup, eggs, vanilla, vinegar, and salt. Spoon 2 to 2½ teaspoons (4 to 5 grams) pecans into each prepared crust. Pour filling on top of pecans to $\frac{1}{2}$ inch below edge of cup.

4. Bake in bottom third of oven for 10 minutes. Reduce oven temperature to 400°F (200°C) Bake until filling is set and puffed, 8 to 10 minutes more, covering with foil to prevent excess browning, if necessary. (If you want a runnier texture to your butter tart, bake just until filling is set, 3 to 4 minutes less.) Let cool in pan for 10 minutes. Run a sharp knife around edges of tarts, and let cool completely in pan. (If you have difficulty removing tarts from pan, freeze for 20 minutes before popping them out.) Bring to room temperature before serving

FLAKY PASTRY DOUGH

Makes dough for 12 tarts

- $3\frac{1}{2}$ cups (438 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 tablespoon (12 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) cold all-vegetable shortening, cubed
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (113 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed
- $\frac{1}{2}$ to $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (80 to 120 grams) cold water, divided
- 1 large egg yolk (19 grams)
- $1\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (7.5 grams) fresh lemon juice



Pecan Butter Tarts

1. In the work bowl of a food processor, place flour, sugar, and salt; pulse until combined. Add cold shortening and butter, and pulse until mixture is crumbly.

2. In a small bowl, whisk together $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (80 grams) cold water, egg yolk, and lemon juice. With processor running, gradually add egg yolk mixture, pulsing until dough begins to come together. (Dough will be softer than a pie dough, but you don't want it to be sticky.) Add remaining water, if necessary.

3. Turn out dough onto a lightly floured surface, and knead until dough comes together. Divide in half. On a lightly floured sheet of parchment paper, roll half of dough to $\frac{1}{4}$ -inch thickness. Transfer to a rimmed baking sheet. Repeat with remaining dough. Refrigerate for 1 hour.

MINCEMEAT BRAID

Makes about 8 servings

A medley of dried fruits, distilled spirits, and spices, mincemeat reflects Canada's—particularly British Columbia's—English roots, where this fruity mix originated. Often used as a filling in pies and tarts, we incorporated the boozy, jammy filling into a buttery puff pastry braid perfect for the holiday season.

Quick Puff Pastry (recipe follows)

Mincemeat Filling (recipe follows)

- 1 large egg (50 grams), lightly beaten
- 2 teaspoons (10 grams) whole milk
- 2 tablespoons (24 grams) turbinado sugar

1. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).

2. On a lightly floured sheet of parchment paper, roll Quick Puff Pastry into a 16x14-inch rectangle. Trim edges of dough. Spread Mincemeat Filling down center third of dough, leaving a 1-inch border at top and bottom. Using a sharp knife, cut 1-inch diagonal strips into dough on both sides of filling. Fold top and bottom pieces over filling, and braid strips of dough over filling. Pinch last piece to seal. Transfer braid with parchment to a rimmed baking sheet. Freeze for 15 minutes.

3. In a small bowl, whisk together egg and milk. Brush top of dough with egg wash, and sprinkle with turbinado sugar.

4. Bake until golden brown, 45 to 50 minutes, loosely covering with foil to prevent excess browning, if necessary. Let cool for 30 minutes. Serve warm or at room temperature.

QUICK PUFF PASTRY

Makes dough for 1 braid

- 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (333 grams) all-purpose flour
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ cups (377 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed
- 1 $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoons (4.5 grams) kosher salt
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 grams) cold water

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat flour, cold butter, and salt at low speed just until butter is coated with flour, about 30 seconds. With mixer running, add $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (120 grams) cold water in a slow, steady stream just until dough comes together, about 1 minute. (There will still be large pieces of butter.) Cover and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

2. On a lightly floured surface, roll dough into a 15x9-inch rectangle. Fold dough into thirds, like a letter. Rotate dough 90 degrees, and fold dough into thirds again. Wrap in plastic wrap, and refrigerate for at least 1 hour.

MINCEMEAT FILLING

Makes 4 cups

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (76 grams) unsalted butter
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (165 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- 2 medium Gala apples (280 grams), peeled and grated
- 1 cup (240 grams) apple cider
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (96 grams) chopped dried apricots
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (96 grams) dried figs, stems removed, and diced
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (96 grams) mixed fruit peel
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (96 grams) sour cherries
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (64 grams) dried cranberries
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (64 grams) dried currants

- 1 tablespoon (9 grams) orange zest
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (80 grams) fresh orange juice
- 1 tablespoon (11 grams) chopped candied ginger
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground cinnamon
- 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground nutmeg
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground ginger
- $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cloves
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (120 grams) brandy

1. In a large Dutch oven, melt butter and brown sugar over medium-high heat, stirring constantly. Add apples, apple cider, apricots, figs, mixed peel, cherries, cranberries, currants, orange zest and juice, candied ginger, salt, cinnamon, nutmeg, ground ginger, and cloves; bring to a boil, stirring frequently. Reduce heat to low, and simmer, stirring frequently, until thickened and no liquid remains, about 30 minutes. Remove from heat, and stir in brandy. Let cool completely. Transfer to an airtight container, and refrigerate for least 12 hours before using. (Letting the mincemeat stand overnight will allow flavors to marinate and for the fruit to soak up the brandy.)

Note: You can make Mincemeat Filling up to 1 week ahead of time. Instead of adding $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (120 grams) brandy after cooking, only add $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (60 grams) brandy, and reserve remaining brandy to stir in gradually every other day to keep the filling from drying out.



FIGGY DUFF

Makes 6 to 8 servings

Originating from Newfoundland on the Canadian East Coast, this traditional steamed bread pudding derives its eclectic name from two old Cornish colloquialisms: "figgy," a word for raisins, and "duff," another term for pudding. Here, we spike our sultana-rich bread pudding with warm rum and top the tender finished product with a maple-infused butter sauce.

- 1 cup (128 grams) golden raisins
 - 1 cup (128 grams) sultana raisins
 - 1 cup (128 grams) raisins
 - 1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) lemon zest
 - ½ cup (80 grams) spiced rum
 - ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter, softened
 - ¾ cup (165 grams) firmly packed brown sugar
 - 2 large eggs (100 grams)
 - 3 tablespoons (63 grams) fancy molasses
 - 1¼ cups (228 grams) dried bread crumbs
 - ¾ cup (94 grams) all-purpose flour
 - 2 teaspoons (4 grams) ground cinnamon
 - 1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) kosher salt
 - 1½ teaspoons (7.5 grams) baking powder
 - 1 teaspoon (2 grams) ground allspice
 - ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground ginger
 - ¾ cup (113 grams) fresh blueberries
- Maple Butter Sauce (recipe follows)

1. In a heatproof bowl, combine golden raisins, sultanas, raisins, and zest. In a small saucepan, heat rum over medium heat (do not boil). Pour hot rum over dried fruit. Cover and let stand for 30 minutes.
2. Preheat oven to 275°F (140°C). Butter and flour a 6-cup steamed pudding mold.
3. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and brown sugar at medium speed until fluffy, 3 to 4 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Add eggs, one at a time, beating just until combined after each addition. Beat in molasses.

4. In a medium bowl, whisk together bread crumbs, flour, cinnamon, salt, baking powder, allspice, and ginger. With mixer on low speed, gradually add bread crumbs mixture to butter mixture, beating just until combined. Add dried fruit mixture and blueberries, beating just until combined. (Batter will be thick.)
5. Spoon batter into prepared mold, smoothing top with an offset spatula. Cover with lid, and place in a large Dutch oven. Fill Dutch oven with enough water to come three-fourths of the way up pudding basin. (Your Dutch oven should remain uncovered.)
6. Bake until a wooden pick inserted in center comes out clean, 2 hours and 15 minutes to 2 hours and 45 minutes. (Texture of center will be closer to a pudding consistency than a cake.) Remove lid, and let cool in pan for 20 minutes. Invert onto a wire rack. Serve warm or at room temperature with Maple Butter Sauce.

Note: You can substitute a 6-cup Bundt pan for the pudding steamer, if desired. In step 5, cover pan with a sheet of parchment paper, followed by a piece of foil. Fasten with twine around lip of pan, and trim overhanging edges. Continue as directed.

MAPLE BUTTER SAUCE

Makes ¾ cup

- ½ cup (170 grams) Grade A amber maple syrup
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) spiced rum
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) heavy whipping cream

1. In a small saucepan, bring maple syrup and butter to a boil over medium-high heat. Cook for 3 minutes, stirring constantly. Remove from heat, and stir in rum and salt. Let cool to room temperature. Whisk in cream.

NANAIMO BARS

Makes 16

Named after the city of Nanaimo on British Columbia's Vancouver Island, this chocolate wafer crumb-crust and custard-filled treat has been an iconic staple in Canadian households since the mid-1950s. With our own twist on the classic, toasted almonds add nutty flavor and crunch while the flaked sea salt cuts through its oh-so-rich decadence.

- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter
- 6 tablespoons (30 grams) unsweetened cocoa powder
- ½ cup (67 grams) granulated sugar
- 1 teaspoon (3 grams) kosher salt
- 1 large egg (50 grams), lightly beaten
- ½ teaspoon (3 grams) vanilla bean paste
- 1¼ cups (228 grams) graham cracker crumbs
- ¾ cup (85 grams) sweetened flaked coconut
- ½ cup (38 grams) blanched slivered almonds, finely chopped

Custard Filling (recipe follows)

Grand Marnier Ganache (recipe follows)

- ½ cup (38 grams) whole almonds, roughly chopped
- 2 teaspoons (6 grams) flaked salt

1. Line an 8-inch square baking pan with parchment paper, letting excess extend over sides of pan. Spray with cooking spray.
2. In the top of a double boiler, combine butter, cocoa, sugar, and salt. Cook over simmering water, stirring constantly, until butter is melted. Add egg and vanilla bean paste, stirring until thickened and smooth, about 1 minute. Remove from heat, and stir in graham cracker crumbs, coconut, and slivered almonds.
3. Press mixture into bottom of prepared pan. Spread Custard Filling onto prepared crust, smoothing top with an offset spatula. Spread Grand Marnier Ganache on top of Custard Filling, smoothing top with an offset spatula. Sprinkle with chopped whole almonds and flaked salt. Refrigerate for at least 2 hours. Using excess parchment as handles, remove from pan, and cut into bars. Serve at room temperature.

CUSTARD FILLING

Makes 1½ cups

- ½ cup plus 2 tablespoons (141 grams) unsalted butter, softened
- 2 tablespoons (20 grams) vanilla custard powder*
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- 2½ cups (300 grams) confectioners' sugar, sifted
- 3 tablespoons (45 grams) heavy whipping cream

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, beat butter and custard powder at medium speed until creamy, 2 to 3 minutes, stopping to scrape sides of bowl. Stir in vanilla. Gradually add confectioners' sugar alternately with cream, beating until combined. Beat until fluffy, about 1 minute.

*We used Bird's Custard Powder.

GRAND MARNIER GANACHE

Makes ½ cup

- 4 ounces (115 grams) 56% cacao semisweet chocolate, chopped
- 1½ tablespoons (21 grams) unsalted butter
- 2 tablespoons (30 grams) heavy whipping cream, warmed
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) Grand Marnier

1. In the top of a double boiler, melt chocolate and butter over medium-low heat. Remove from heat; stir in warm cream until combined. Stir in Grand Marnier.

SUGAR PIE

Makes 1 (9-inch) pie

For Quebecers, sugar pie, or tarte au sucre, is synonymous with Christmas indulgence. Brought to Quebec by French immigrants, this sweet pie combines brown sugar and maple syrup, a sugar combo that slowly caramelizes while baking, creating a light crunchy top and a custard-like silky interior.

Butter Piecrust (recipe follows)

- 1½ cups (330 grams) firmly packed light brown sugar
- ¼ cup (85 grams) maple syrup
- 3 tablespoons (24 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 large egg yolks (37 grams)
- 1 large egg (50 grams)
- 1 cup (240 grams) heavy whipping cream
- 3 tablespoons (42 grams) unsalted butter
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt

Garnish: confectioners' sugar

1. On a lightly floured surface, roll Butter Piecrust to ¼-inch thickness. Transfer to a 9-inch pie plate, pressing into bottom and up sides. Trim excess dough. Fold edges under, and crimp as desired. Freeze for 10 minutes.
2. Preheat oven to 400°F (200°C).
3. Top dough with a piece of parchment paper, letting ends extend over edges of plate. Add pie weights.

4. Bake until edges are set, about 10 minutes. Carefully remove paper and weights. Bake until bottom of crust is set, about 2 minutes more. Reduce oven temperature to 350°F (180°C).

5. In a large bowl, whisk together brown sugar, maple syrup, flour, egg yolks, and egg until smooth.

6. In a small saucepan, bring cream and butter to a simmer over medium-high heat. Whisking constantly, slowly pour hot cream mixture into sugar mixture. Whisk in vanilla and salt. Strain mixture through a fine-mesh sieve, discarding solids. Pour filling into prepared crust. Loosely cover with foil.

7. Bake in bottom third of oven until crust is golden brown and filling is set (center should still jiggle slightly), 50 to 55 minutes. Let cool completely. Garnish with confectioners' sugar, if desired.

BUTTER PIECRUST

Makes 1 (9-inch) crust

- 2½ cups (313 grams) all-purpose flour
- 2 tablespoons (24 grams) granulated sugar
- 1½ teaspoons (4.5 grams) kosher salt
- ¼ cup (170 grams) cold unsalted butter, cubed
- ⅓ cup (120 grams) ice water

1. In the work bowl of a food processor, place flour, sugar, and salt; pulse until combined. Add cold butter, and pulse until mixture is crumbly. Add ice water, 2 tablespoons (30 grams) at a time, just until dough comes together (you may not need all of the water). Shape dough into a disk, and wrap tightly in plastic wrap. Refrigerate until chilled, about 2 hours. ■

bubbles & bites for New Year's Eve

CHERYL WAKERHAUSER, AUTHOR OF *MODERN FRENCH PASTRY*, SHARES HER TIPS FOR THROWING A PÂTISSERIE PARTY THAT REALLY SPARKLES THIS NEW YEAR'S EVE

BY KYLE GRACE MILLS

PHOTOGRAPHY BY ALAN WEINER



With over 400 cuvées of Champagne currently available at her Portland, Oregon, bakery, Pix Pâtisserie, Cheryl Wakerhauser has the art of bubbles and pastry pairings down pat. We asked the connoisseur for her top pairing guidelines—plus her bubbles picks and an exclusive recipe from her recent cookbook, *Modern French Pastry* (Page Street Publishing, 2017)—to help you start 2018 in good taste

CHERYL'S PAIRING TIPS

1. NOT ALL CHAMPAGNES OR SPARKLING WINES GO WITH DESSERT

"It's a misconception that all bubbles go with dessert. Some Champagne is meant for oysters, not chocolate, and you need to make sure you're selecting the right Champagne for your pastry. While sweet may seem the obvious choice, drier sparkling wine is a better complement for the subtle sweetness of French pâtisserie. Bubbles pair well with pâtisserie because they help cleanse your palate for each bite, opening you up to new layers of flavor."

2. WHEN IN DOUBT, CHOOSE ROSÉ

"Rosé Champagne or sparkling rosé has a delightful fruitiness, but it can also be dry. This makes it a perfect match for many desserts, particularly fruity desserts. As an added bonus, dry bubbly rosés can hold their own against dark and bittersweet chocolate notes."

3. PAIR YOUR BUBBLY ROSÉ WITH TART AND BITTER FLAVORS

"Look for a pastry recipe that highlights berries, like strawberries, cherries, or raspberries. Or maybe a recipe that blends dark, almost bitter chocolate with underlying fruity flavors. You want to choose something not too sweet, hopefully paired with other complex yet complementary notes, even a savory element."

4. END THE YEAR WITH A (SMALL) SHOWSTOPPER PASTRY

"Pâtisserie in itself is a showstopper. The beauty of pastry is that there is a surprise in every bite. You might find something creamy; you might find something crunchy. It's always a complex dining experience. And particularly with French pâtisserie, the portions are for individuals—small packages for each person. For New Year's, what better way to celebrate than with a little jewelry box of packaged pastry?"

5. SPRING FOR SMALL PRODUCER GRAPES

"A lot of my Champagnes and wines come from small producers. They grow their own grapes. Larger producers are gathering their grapes from all different kinds of vineyards, so they have less control over the quality and character of the grapes. Small producers are harvesting from their own vineyards, controlling exactly how their Champagne is produced from beginning to end. It leads to more stylistic wines, and similar to pastry, quality ingredients lead to quality products."



Miniature Bourbon Éclairs

Makes 30

Soon to trounce the macaron? The éclair has made a resurgence in Paris in recent years as it's been given a makeover. The new éclair now is always covered with craquelin for a bit of crunch and comes in a rainbow of colors and flavors beyond the classic chocolate and coffee we once knew them for. With that said, fill them with whatever you want ... the possibilities are endless.

CRAQUELIN

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (68 grams) unsalted butter
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (80 grams) brown sugar
- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (80 grams) all-purpose flour

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment, mix together the butter and brown sugar on medium speed until smooth, about 2 minutes. Add the flour and mix on low speed until sandy, about 1 minute. Pour onto a silicone baking mat and squeeze the mixture in your hands until it starts to stick together. Top it with a second silicone baking mat, smooth side down.

2. Roll the dough between the smooth sides of the mats into a rough 28-centimeter (11-inch) square about the thickness of a credit card. Thinner is better, as the craquelin can weigh down the éclairs and restrict their rising. Peel back the top mat and replace it with a piece of parchment. Holding the 2 corners of the paper and the mat farthest from you, lift and flip the craquelin over so the parchment is on the bottom. Peel back the second silicone mat. If the mats are sticking to the craquelin, put them in the freezer for 10 minutes.

3. Using a ruler as a guide, cut a straight edge along the bottom of the craquelin. Move the ruler up 6 centimeters (2.5 inches) and make a parallel cut. Continue cutting rows until you reach the top edge of the craquelin. Then,

cut individual pieces, 2.5 centimeters (1 inch) wide, from the rows, leaving them in place on the parchment. Any scraps can be rerolled, if needed. Freeze the craquelin.

PÂTE À CHOUX

- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (85 grams) milk
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (85 grams) water
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) salt
- 2 teaspoons (8 grams) sugar
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup (85 grams) unsalted butter
- $\frac{3}{4}$ cup (95 grams) bread flour, sifted
- 3 large eggs (170 grams)

One of the core recipes of French pastry. The mixing and baking can be tricky at first. Be sure to follow the directions and these tips.

- Be careful not to let the mixture boil before the butter has melted, or else some of your liquid may evaporate while waiting for the butter to melt. This changes the recipe.
- The amount of eggs used will vary, depending on how dry the mixtures are. You may not need them all or you may need more.
- Do not substitute other flours for bread flour. The extra gluten in bread flour has the needed strength to capture the steam released during cooking, leaving the void that will be filled with cream.

1. Preheat the oven to 350°F (175°C). Line 2 half sheet pans with silicone baking mats. In a medium saucepan, combine the milk, water, salt, sugar and butter. Warm the mixture over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until the butter is melted. Then, bring the mixture to a boil. Remove the pan from the heat, add all the flour at once and stir with a wooden spoon. Return the pan to the stove and continue to stir until all the liquids are absorbed and the mixture comes together. Once you see a film of dough on the bottom of the pan and the mixture starts to pull away from the sides and roll toward the middle, about 10 seconds, remove it from the heat. Transfer the mixture to the bowl of the stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Mix on low speed for 1 minute to cool slightly.

2. Lightly mix the eggs to break up the yolks. Add about a fifth of the eggs to the warm batter and mix on medium speed until they are completely absorbed, about 30 seconds. Add another fifth and allow to incorporate. The eggs may slosh around a bit in the bowl, but slowly they will become absorbed. Continue

adding eggs, little by little, until the batter starts to look glossy and to loosen up, scraping the bottom of the bowl often.

3. Place the pâte à choux in a piping bag fitted with a 1-centimeter (0.5-inch) pastry tip. Pipe the dough in 6-centimeter (2.5-inch) straight lines on a silicone baking mat. At the end of the éclair, stop applying pressure to the bag and flick your wrist slightly down and then up to release the dough from the tip. Leave a 5-centimeter (2-inch) space between each éclair for rising space. Gently place a piece of craquelin on the top of each one.

4. Place the éclairs in the oven, spacing the pans evenly. Bake until the craquelin and the éclair bottoms are light golden brown, about 30 minutes. Do not open the oven door the first 20 minutes. When they are done, immediately remove the éclairs from the pans and place on a wire rack to cool.

BOURBON PASTRY CREAM

- 2 cups (500 grams) milk**
- 5 large egg yolks (100 grams)**
- ½ cup (125 grams) sugar**
- 5 tablespoons (40 grams) cornstarch**
- 2 tablespoons (25 grams) unsalted butter**
- 2 tablespoons (28 grams) bourbon**

1. In a microwave-safe bowl, combine all the pastry cream ingredients, except the bourbon. Blend them with an immersion blender and then place the bowl in the microwave. Cook on high until the top and sides of the pastry cream are set and jiggle like Jell-O when you shake the bowl, 5 to 7 minutes. The center will still be a bit liquid and the sides almost curdled. With a clean immersion blender, mix the pastry cream to combine, scrape the sides of the bowl and continue to blend in the center and also just at the surface until smooth. If, after blending, the cream is still very runny and has not thickened, continue to cook and blend until you have the consistency of pudding. Cover the surface with plastic wrap and refrigerate.

2. Transfer the cold pastry cream to the bowl of the stand mixer fitted with the paddle attachment. Mix on high speed until smooth, about 30 seconds. Stir in the bourbon.

CHERRY PURÉE

- 1 cup (175 grams) Amarena cherries,* well strained**

1. Purée the cherries in a food processor.

**We used Fabbri Amarena Cherries in Syrup found on amazon.com.*

CHOCOLATE DÉCOR

14 ounces (400 grams) dark chocolate

1. Trace the template (below) 30 times onto the smooth side of a chocolate transfer sheet* and cut them out. Temper the dark chocolate in the microwave. Spread the chocolate, using a small offset spatula, onto the tacky side of the transfer sheet. Place into paper towel rolls cut in half to curve the sides while the chocolate sets. Work quickly. You may need to rewarm the chocolate just a tiny bit in the microwave, but don't overheat it or it will be out of temper. After about 15 minutes, remove the plastic.

**We used Versailles Color Me Transfer Sheet found on shop chefrubber.com.*

Assembly:

Place the pastry cream in a piping bag tightly fitted with a small round pastry tip. Pierce the bottom of the éclair in the center and fill while angling the tip toward each end. Pipe a thin line of puréed cherries along the top. Attach the chocolate décor to the cherries. Once filled, éclairs should be eaten within 24 hours.

Template for Chocolate Décor:



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Using a ruler, cut craquelin into rectangles. These will be the tops of the éclairs.



Once pâte à choux starts to pull away from sides of pan, it is ready for the eggs.



Before all the eggs are added, test the batter by running your finger through it to create a trough. If the trough stays stiff, add more eggs. Once the trough slowly moves back inward, but does not close completely, stop. The trough in the bottom bowl above is perfect. ☑

origin of a classic

Russian Honey Cake

THE MYSTERIES OF THIS
MANY-LAYERED CAKE
REVEALED—SORT OF



BY JAMIE FELDMAN
RECIPE DEVELOPMENT AND FOOD STYLING BY
ELIZABETH STRINGER

I'd never heard of *medovik*, let alone tasted it, until one caught my eye at a Russian/Ukrainian bakery in Brooklyn's Brighton Beach neighborhood, which is appropriately nicknamed "Little Odessa." *Medovik*, also known as Russian Honey Cake, is a many-tiered creation. Stacking anywhere from five to 15 thin layers of caramel, almost graham cracker-y cake with a honey-cream filling that soaks into the pastry makes for a rich, toasty, beautiful beast of a cake. The bakery was slicing individual pieces off a giant mother cake—I was hooked after one bite.

Medovik is an easy dessert to love but a difficult one to understand. In my attempts to unravel its history, I came across etymological dead ends, historical half-truths, and the disapproving looks of several Russian pastry chefs. The trouble started early on when I began referring to *medovik* as Russian. As it turns out, much of Eastern Europe considers some form of honey layer cake their own invention. The chef who has arguably done the most to popularize *medovik* in the U.S., Michelle Polzine of 20th Century Cafe in San Francisco, first tasted it in Prague—she's never been to Russia.

Michelle, who calls her 20-layer version a "Krasinski Torte" in honor of her friend Nicole Krasinski of San Francisco's popular State Bird Provisions, also refused to divulge much in the way of specifics about how she makes her best-selling version. Michelle did offer that after weeks of fine-tuning technique, she threw all her prototypes down the drain and started from scratch with a radical new method that's "kind of insane." It's no surprise that Michelle had to reverse-engineer her cake from a taste memory: none of the Russian bakers I approached were willing to talk. And though I did spend an entire morning watching homemade Russian cooking demos on YouTube to see how it's done, I suspect much was lost in translation.

Another source sharing in my frustration, Deb Perelman, author of the popular cooking blog *Smitten Kitchen* and its accompanying cookbook, first tasted the cake courtesy of her Russian mother-in-law. "I thought it was like a really fancy banana bread with cream cheese filling," she recalls. Her desire to recreate it led to two years of off-and-on research and testing, ultimately landing on a "weird technique" that results in "eight paper-thin cake layers with a creamy, slightly tangy filling and coating ... that tastes like dreamy frosted graham crackers." The version she published on her site last year has nearly 300 comments to date from fans who recall growing up with some version of the endlessly adaptable cake to newcomers intrigued by its crumb-coated good looks and unusual flavor.

Finally, in a fit of mild desperation, I reached out to Darra Goldstein, the founding editor of *Gastronomica*, author of the cookbook *A Taste of Russia*, and a professor of Russian at Williams College in Massachusetts. If she didn't have the answers, I figured, no one would, and fortunately, my hunch proved correct.



"Part of the difficulty is that there are many variations," Darra began. "Honey cakes in all different forms are found throughout Eastern and Central Europe, Russia, and Germany." The earliest mentions of some form of honey cake emerged from the area we consider Russia in the early Middle Ages, though not the torte-like confection I fell for in Brighton Beach. Dense, gingerbread-esque cakes began popping up in the 13th and 14th centuries, which were flavored with spices and the traditional Russian sweetener: honey. These gingerbread cakes took a step closer to *medovik* under Peter the Great in the 17th century, when Russian chefs, newly open to Western influence, began stacking them in the European fashion between layers of jam.

Darra then conveyed an oft-repeated Russian "fake-lore" about the cake. "I can't verify this story, and I don't even really believe it, but I love stories like this because it constructs a mythology," she says. It goes like this: "There is a story that Alexander I's wife, the czarina, didn't like honey and banned it from her court's kitchens. A new chef

arrived who didn't know the rule. He made her a special dessert—a more refined version of the jam layer cake, with a whipped sour cream filling between the honey cake layers instead. After she ate it, the czarina demanded to know who made such a thing. The chef, who had since learned of her distaste for honey, was convinced he was about to be executed. But much to everyone's surprise, she adored the cake, and it has been very popular across the country ever since."

So, there you have it—as close as we'll probably ever come to revealing the true history of the *medovik*. "Like most things that have existed for a long time, it's impossible to pinpoint when and where that first cake really came from," says Darra. But maybe that's not so important, after all—what really matters here is understanding the techniques and processes that have stuck over the centuries, and how the cake has evolved over time. We may never truly know everything about *medovik*'s checkered past, but that's all part of its mysterious honey-kissed allure.

10-Layer Spiced Russian Honey Cake

Makes 1 (8-inch) cake

With the texture of soft, spongy gingerbread, this honey-infused cake feels more like a cookie. Although some versions do not include spices, we couldn't help but throw in a little ginger, cloves, and allspice for enhanced holiday flavor. To balance out the spice and sweeten things up, we increased the sugar in the traditional whipped sour cream filling—think cream cheese frosting with a subtle tang. This baking process may be laborious, but it is also forgiving. Expect the assembly to be messy, and remember you can smooth over any filling overflow on the sides of the cake during the final frosting.

- ¼ cup (150 grams) granulated sugar**
- ½ cup (113 grams) unsalted butter**
- ¼ cup (85 grams) honey**
- 1 teaspoon (5 grams) baking soda**
- 3 large eggs (150 grams), lightly beaten**
- 3½ cups (438 grams) all-purpose flour, divided**
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground allspice**
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground cloves**
- ½ teaspoon (1 gram) ground ginger**
- ¼ teaspoon kosher salt**
- 1 teaspoon (4 grams) vanilla extract**

Sour Cream Frosting (recipe follows)

Garnish: fresh currants, White Chocolate Honeycomb (recipe follows)

- 1.** Preheat oven to 350°F (180°C).
- 2.** In a medium saucepan, bring sugar, butter, and honey to a simmer over medium heat. Simmer for 4 minutes; remove from heat. Whisk in baking soda. (The mixture will violently bubble up and drastically change in color. Keep whisking until a dark amber color is achieved and mixture is no longer bubbling.) Whisking vigorously, gradually add eggs in a slow, steady stream until combined.
- 3.** In a large bowl, whisk together 3 cups (375 grams) flour, allspice, cloves, ginger, and salt. Using a wooden spoon, stir flour mixture and vanilla into honey mixture until well combined. Add remaining ½ cup (63 grams) flour, stirring gently just until combined.
- 4.** Transfer dough to a sheet of parchment paper, and divide into 10 equal portions. Cover with a towel to keep warm. Working with 1 piece of dough at a time, lightly sprinkle top with flour, and place on another sheet of parchment paper. Roll into an 8-inch circle, using an 8-inch round cake pan as a guide. Trim

edges, reserving scraps. Transfer dough circle on parchment to a rimmed baking sheet. (If dough becomes cold while working with it, you can microwave it for 5 seconds to warm back up. When cold, dough is difficult to roll out, and prone to forming a skin.)

5. Bake for 6 minutes. Remove from oven, and place on a wire rack. Repeat procedure with remaining dough circles.

6. Bake scraps for 7 minutes; let cool. Transfer to the work bowl of a food processor; pulse until finely ground. Reserve 1 cup (100 grams) cake crumbs for White Chocolate Honeycomb.

7. Place one cake layer on a serving plate, and spread with ½ cup (120 grams) Sour Cream Frosting. Repeat with remaining layers, pressing down gently as you go to keep layers from having air gaps. Refrigerate for at least 10 hours.

8. Spread remaining Sour Cream Frosting on top and sides of cake. Sprinkle remaining cake crumbs in a circle on top of cake. Garnish with currants and White Chocolate Honeycomb, if desired. Cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

SOUR CREAM FROSTING

Makes about 8 cups

- 1 cup (240 grams) heavy whipping cream
- 4 cups (960 grams) sour cream
- 3 cups (360 grams) confectioners' sugar

1. In the bowl of a stand mixer fitted with the whisk attachment, beat cream at high speed until stiff peaks form, 1 to 2 minutes.
2. In a large bowl, whisk together sour cream and confectioners' sugar. Fold whipped cream into sour cream mixture. Refrigerate until ready to use.

WHITE CHOCOLATE HONEYCOMB

Makes about 2 cups

- $\frac{1}{4}$ cup (85 grams) white chocolate melting wafers*
- 1 cup (100 grams) reserved cake crumbs

1. In the top of a double boiler, melt chocolate baking wafers over simmering water. (Alternately, in a medium microwave-safe bowl, melt chocolate on medium in 30-second intervals, stirring between each, until chocolate is melted and smooth.) Spread a thin layer of melted chocolate over a food-grade honeycomb mold. Let dry at room temperature overnight, or refrigerate until set. Gently remove mold, and break honeycomb into small pieces. Sprinkle with reserved cake crumbs.

*We used Godiva.

Note: We used a PME Honeycomb Design Impression Mat, available on amazon.com.

PRO TIP

The overnight refrigeration is crucial, allowing the ample amounts of creamy filling slathered between each layer to soak into and help soften the cake. The cake is prone to leaning after assembly, so be sure it is on a level shelf when refrigerating. To ensure that the layers don't shift, stick a wooden skewer through the center of the cake after assembling. Remove skewer before frosting top and sides of cake. □





our obsession

vintage SANTA'S COOKIE plates

SERVING UP SANTA'S FAVORITE FORM OF HAZARD PAY

'T's the night before Christmas, and chances are, you've set out a special, merry platter of your best holiday cookies for a special, portly man in red. Running the gamut from elegant porcelain to cute earthenware to handmade ceramic, the Santa's Cookie Plate isn't an exercise in taste—it is a touchstone for one of the most celebrated holiday baking traditions. During childhood, this platter of cookies is the time-honored ritual that proves Santa, however improbable, is the real deal. How else to explain the missing cookies, the trail of shortbread crumbs, the drained glass of milk? Whether your cookie offering is meant as a last-minute bribe or a heartfelt thank-you, it's tangible proof that benevolent magic visited your home. An empty Santa's Cookie Plate remains the ultimate Yuletide baking challenge. As these festive heirlooms change hands, the magic lives on, giving kids and, more importantly, adults something to believe in. Whether we make it on the naughty or nice list, we'll be keeping a light on and our best plate out for Old Saint Nick. ■

—KYLE GRACE MILLS



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